United Nations S/PV.8045

Security Council

Seventy-second year

Provisional

8045th meeting
Wednesday, 13 September 2017, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Alemu	(Ethiopia)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Inchauste Jordán
	China	Mr. Zhang Dianbin
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	France	Mrs. Gueguen
	Italy	Mr. Lambertini
	Japan	Mr. Kawamura
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Umarov
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Senegal	Mr. Seck
	Sweden	Mr. Skau
	Ukraine	Mr. Vitrenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Allen
	United States of America	Ms. Sison
	Uruguay	Mr. Bermúdez

Agenda

The situation in Guinea-Bissau

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. *Corrections* should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

17-28498 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Guinea-Bissau

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Council has before it the text of a statement by the President on behalf of the Council on the subject of today's meeting. I thank Council members for their valuable contributions to the statement.

In accordance with the understanding reached among the members of the Council, I shall take it that the members of the Security Council agree to the statement, which will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2017/17.

The meeting rose at 10.05 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.8046

Security Council

Seventy-second year

Provisional

8046th meeting
Wednesday, 13 September 2017, 10.05 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Alemu	(Ethiopia)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Inchauste Jordán
	China	Mr. Zhang Dianbin
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
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Agenda

The situation in Somalia

Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2017/751)

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17-28489 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Somalia

Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2017/751)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Somalia to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Michael Keating, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, and Mr. Francisco Caetano Jose Madeira, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of the African Union Mission in Somalia.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome Mr. Keating and Mr. Madeira, who are joining this meeting via video-teleconference from Mogadishu.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2017/751, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on Somalia.

I now give the floor to Mr. Keating.

Mr. Keating: The long-term and immediate challenges facing Somalia remain formidable, be they humanitarian, economic, security or political. The unity of the Council and the solidarity of the international community have been essential to the gradual if fragile progress that is being made.

At my last briefing in March (see S/PV.7905), the humanitarian crisis was deteriorating fast. Thanks to the swift and generous contribution of more than $1 billion for humanitarian action since the beginning of the year, agencies have been able to mount a famine-prevention response reaching over 3 million people per month. The worst of the famine threat has been averted. However, the damage to lives and livelihoods, particularly of women, children and marginalized groups, has been extensive. Approximately 900,000 people have been newly displaced over the past five months, and the risk of famine remains. An imperative for Somalis is to escape the vicious cycle of recurring weather-related shocks. Humanitarian and development partners are coming together to build institutional capacity, strengthen resilience and boost productivity in line with the Secretary-General's new way of working. The Federal Government, supported by the United Nations and the World Bank, is developing plans for a comprehensive post-disaster needs assessment of the impact of the drought and a recovery and resilience framework to reduce the risk of famine.

The peaceful transition of power earlier this year, following the electoral process, generated a sense of hope and a moment of opportunity. The Federal Government remains determined to achieve core objectives, including improving security, notably in Mogadishu, creating jobs and adopting key legislation that will make a difference, but its honeymoon period is over. Somalia's Government is not the first to experience that phenomenon. Immediate political challenges are complicated by ill-defined relationships between the Federal Government and Federal member states, between the executive and the legislative branches of Government, between the newly formed Upper House of the Federal Parliament and the House of the People. Other challenges relate to politicians and power brokers using opportunities to advance their own clan interests or personal ambitions and using tools such as threats of impeachment and motions of no confidence. The key issue is whether the Federal Government will be successful in managing those constituencies and in preventing them from threatening progress on core objectives on the stability of the State.

The strong working relationship between the President and the Prime Minister and the determination of the Federal Government to deliver tangible economic and security benefits for the population are very encouraging. The immediate issues that are currently generating strains in relations between State institutions include the controversy over the transfer to Ethiopia of a well-known Ogaden National Liberation Front figure and the reverberations of the Government's determination to maintain a neutral posture in the dispute among important Gulf partners. They also include simmering disputes around the country, including in HirShabelle and the impeachment of the state President there, the political standoff in

Galmudug, where the state President has been unable to advance power-sharing and reconciliation talks with Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a, and tensions in the southern part of HirShabelle.

If the are unresolved, those could undermine the gains made so far in the state-formation process. The United Nations is working closely with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and other partners to play a constructive role, including to support the HirShabelle elections. A resolution is needed to key issues that will define the Federal State, including the division of powers, and agreements on revenue- and resource-sharing between Federal and state Governments. They also include the structure of the judiciary, the status of the Banadir region, in which the national capital is located, and the formalization of the status of civil Federal member states.

Advancing the review of the provisional Federal Constitution is therefore a priority. Useful consultations are taking place to ensure an inclusive review process, although the respective roles and responsibilities of core institutions still need to be clarified. The next step is a national consultative conference, scheduled in October, that should agree on a two-year master plan. Significant progress has been made on preparing and adopting priority laws, such as the telecommunications bill and the human rights commission act. Completing the constitutional review is also critical for the successful holding of the 2020-2021 elections. The legislative framework and agreement on the electoral model are urgently needed. Those will help dispel scepticism as to whether Somalia can move away from the so-called 4.5 model to universal suffrage.

The crisis in relations between Gulf countries has had an impact on Somalia. Anticipated investments and revenue streams have not been forthcoming, and the Federal Government's declaration of neutrality, while receiving widespread support, has not gone down well with certain constituencies. The Council's continued support is needed to protect Somalia from the potentially destabilizing effects of geopolitical rivalries. Current political turbulence in Somalia must be taken seriously, but should not obscure the steady, if uneven, progress that the country is making.

Somalia has great economic potential, whether in agro-business, livestock, fisheries, trade or renewable and other energy sources, as well as highly entrepreneurial men and women, both in the country and among the diaspora. Unleashing that potential depends upon the success of reaching a political settlement between the Government and the private sector, and upon Government policies and capacities to implement them. A critical requirement will be raising revenues, whether from domestic sources or by accessing concessional finance. Advancing arrears clearance and reaching a decision point on the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative are essential and will require both the strengthening of public financial management and international action. The support of the Council could make a decisive difference.

In the meantime, Somalia remains heavily dependent upon aid. Both traditional and non-traditional donors, including many serving on the Council, have provided generous assistance. The Prime Minister is appealing for immediate budget support to allow the Government to deliver on jobs and security and to strengthen relations with Federal member states by means of fiscal transfers. The United Nations and the World Bank have collaborated closely to devise a surge support package for public works. I urge partners to follow the European Union, Norway and Sweden's lead to use a recurrent cost and reform financing facility to that end.

Security has improved in Mogadishu as a result of the Federal Government's Mogadishu stabilization plan. That deserves more support. However, Al-Shabaab remains a potent threat and the overall security situation in the country remains volatile. Addressing insecurity and the continuing threat from Al-Shabaab require vigorous implementation of the national security architecture agreement and of the comprehensive approach to security. International partners have now been identified and have begun work on each of the four strands of the comprehensive approach to security, namely, enabling the effective operations of the African Union (AU) Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and implementing the transition from AMISOM; strengthening Somalia's security sector, including policing and maritime areas; stabilization; and, lastly, preventing and countering violent extremism. Securing predictable funding for AMISOM is a top priority. The Council members' own deliberations in Addis Ababa last week illuminated the key issues. The Secretary-General's report on funding for AMISOM, due in November, will provide an opportunity to explore and propose funding options, while taking into account the limitations of voluntary contributions.

That should be anchored in a common narrative on Somalia's security needs in the next five years — one shared by the Federal Government, the African Union, the United Nations and the main investors in Somalia's security, including the European Union (EU) and other major bilateral partners. That needs to build upon the recommendations of the joint AU-United Nations review of AMISOM, the outcome of the operational readiness assessment of the Somali National Army currently under way, and progress in implementing the national security architecture agreement. A successful transition of responsibility for security from AMISOM to Somali security institutions requires adequate and coherent support for both AMISOM and Somalia's security forces, as well as clarity about the role of the United Nations Support Office in Somalia, as transition gets under way. Sustained transition requires that key political and operational conditions be met. AMISOM continues to play an indispensable role in protecting Somalia's progress and people. Somali security forces are not yet ready to shoulder full responsibilities. Funding for AMISOM and the Somali security forces must complement one another.

Conflict resolution, local reconciliation and a reduction in violence are essential to progress and to reducing both human and financial costs. The United Nations is working with IGAD, the African Union, the EU and other partners to strengthen national conflict-resolution capacities, as well as to facilitate agreements in specific locations. An example of that has been in Galkayo, where real progress is being made.

In conclusion, Somalia faces immediate crises, as well as basic structural problems, some of which are worrisome in terms of their ability to derail political progress. Providing practical support and political encouragement to the Somali leadership, both at the Federal and state level, will continue to be essential. Allow me to end by thanking Council members for their united and steady commitment to Somalia and continued support to the United Nations, me and my team.

The President: I thank Mr. Keating for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Madeira.

Mr. Madeira: I thank you, Mr. President, for inviting me to this briefing on the ongoing situation in Somalia. I bring greetings to the Security Council from the African Union (AU) Chairperson, His Excellency Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat.

Since 17 May, when I last addressed the Council (see S/PV.7942), there have been significant diplomatic, political and security developments that have had a significant and varying impact on Somalia. Thanks to the combined efforts and proactive mobilization of the Federal Government of Somalia, innovative fieldwork by humanitarian actors and the generous contributions of international partners, this year Somalia has been able to avert what could have been a repeat of the 2011 catastrophic drought.

The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) has worked closely with its partners, collaborating under the umbrella of the Drought Operations Coordination Centre, to identify challenges and provide practical assistance for an effective humanitarian response through information sharing, AMISOM-uniformed personal escorts and protection for United Nations humanitarian assessment missions in Adado, the provision of security for World Food Programme airdrops in Hudur and civic engagements in areas under AMISOM deployments, food and non-food item distribution to internationally displaced persons' camps in Mogadishu and the coordinated airlift of 18 metric tons of nutritional food supplies to Bulo Burte. However, the situation continues to require close monitoring and adaptation, as problems still loom over many places in Somalia. Any neglect might result in a recurrence of a drought, with gloomy consequences.

The AU-United Nations joint review took place in May. Each report that was adopted by the African Union Peace and Security Council on 12 July presented recommendations for key political and security resourcing for the work of AMISOM so that the Mission can complete its transition and start its drawdown.

Since June, Somalia has been affected by the Gulf crisis between a Saudi Arabia-led coalition and Qatar. I will not go into further detail, but I will say that we are happy the anticipated disruptions of governance and the economy, as a result of the crisis, have so far been contained. We are not sure what is in store for tomorrow.

In order to deliver on its political agenda, the Federal Government of Somalia aims to draft 19 pieces of legislation that will be forwarded to the Federal Parliament for debate and approval as part of its current session. That process may eventually face challenges related to time constraints. After concluding stakeholder consultations in preparation for a nationwide constitutional review process, the Minister

for Constitutional Affairs is laying the foundations for political and constitutional reforms in the country, to take place ahead of the one-person, one-vote elections in 2020.

A joint constitutional review parliamentary committee has been established. AMISOM supports the country's political road map on a transfer of power by 2021, which resonates well with the need to meet requisite political conditions for an effective implementation of the AMISOM exit strategy.

In a related development, Somalia's National Independent Electoral Commission completed its drafting of a strategic plan for the 2020-2021 election. However, budgeting difficulties are already emerging as a major challenge in the implementation of its priority activities. The formation and consolidation of regional institutional frameworks and the enactment of requisite legislation at the regional and state levels will be key in addressing issues related to regional and political instability — what we are witnessing in HirShabelle, the south-west and many other places — and in finding a lasting solution to the protracted dialogue and ending dialogue between the state Government and Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a. A lasting solution to those challenges would go a long way in facilitating the implementation of the AMISOM mandate and fulfilling its conditions-based exit strategy.

AMISOM continues to contribute to enhancing security in Somalia, despite violent asymmetrical Al-Shabaab activities. The prime targets of Al-Shabaab's indiscriminate attacks remain the Federal Government, AMISOM and the Somalia national security forces forward-operating bases in all sectors.

Improvised explosive devices (IED) remain Al-Shabaab's weapon of choice. In the period under consideration, there were a total of 139 improvised explosive device incidents in AMISOM areas of operation alone. Thirty-two IED explosions were averted as a result of action taken by AMISOM teams to identify and neutralize those devices. Despite the increase in attacks, AMISOM is responding appropriately to IED threats, as the identification rate of such explosive devices has increased considerably. Nevertheless, Somali civilians remain the main casualties of treacherous Al-Shabaab IED attacks.

From May to June, the Government implemented the Mogadishu stabilization force, which was built using joint Somali security forces, which, to a great extent, contributed to a peaceful holy month of Ramadan. The public appreciated the steps taken by the Government, which was supported by AMISOM and partners. Mogadishu is much safer today than it was yesterday.

Meanwhile, Al-Shabaab is mobilizing efforts to regain initiative through its Amniyat cell network in Mogadishu. They must be effectively dissuaded from continuing that endeavour — through a robust intelligence-collection capability and action. Elsewhere there are varying levels of insecurity, especially in the country's hotspots of Galmudug state and the Hiraan and HirShabelle regions. On the other hand, the security situation in Gaalkacyo is promising, following the establishment of a 100-troop-strong stabilization and law enforcement joint police force and after progress in the political dialogue between the Galmudug and Puntland states' Presidents of May 2017, and AMISOM and UNSOM police collaborative training efforts. The operations in Juba corridor have witnessed the Somali National Army and the Jubaland security forces taking the lead, supported by AMISOM troops and partners to implement their commitments to degrading Al-Shabaab before AMISOM starts its drawdown.

In response to the presidential amnesty decision with regard to Al-Shabaab militant elements who renounce violence and extremist ideologies, AMISOM and the Federal Government of Somalia saw a steady increase in the number of defectors from Al-Shabaab from May to August 2017. In that period, a total of 47 Al-Shabaab militants surrendered to various Somali regional authorities. More Al-Shabaab elements have expressed their intention to defect and hand themselves over to the Government. There is therefore a need to help create conducive conditions for that process to continue and thrive. The fact that a prominent former leader of Al-Shabaab, Mr. Mukhtar Robow, handed himself over to the Federal Government on 13 August is very telling.

In order to address the recruitment of children into Al-Shabaab, AMISOM, along with other international partners, participated in the development of the 2017-2018 work plan of the child protection unit at the Minister of Defence, with a focus on children associated with armed conflict.

AMISOM, working closely with the Federal Government of Somalia and international partners, is pressing ahead with the implementation of the commitments made at the 11 May London Conference

on the national security architecture and the new security pact, the recommendations of the AU-United Nations joint review, the decision of the AU Peace and Security Council of 12 July communiqué on AMISOM, and resolution 2372 (2017) on the mandate of AMISOM until elections are held.

On 2 July, on the margins of the AU Summit, the a ministerial meetiong of AMISOM troop- and police-contributing countries was held in Addis Ababa to discuss the AU-United Nations joint review recommendations, especially as they relate to the AMISOM drawdown and further related tasks. Given the unpredictable and unsustainable resource mobilization for AMISOM after June 2018, and considering the challenges at hand, the meeting agreed to commission an AU technical expert team to come up with options for the AU in the light of the recommendations by the AU-United Nations joint review of AMISOM's exit strategy.

In order to identify the most effective ways of implementing the recommendations of the AU-United Nations joint review on AMISOM, a joint African Union Mission in Somalia and the Federal Government of Somalia conference on the transitioning of security responsibilities from AMISOM to the Somali security forces was held from 24 to 28 July in Mogadishu. That conference of security experts from both sides provided a platform where AMISOM and the Somali Federal Government forces deliberated on the transitioning imperatives. The conference discussed the handover and takeover of AMISOM's and Somali security forces' forward-operating bases in order to release 1,000 AMISOM troops for expanded military operations before the commencement of the drawdown in December.

The Federal Government of Somalia outlined its priorities, including the need to conduct an operational readiness assessment of Somali national security forces and forward-operating bases as a first step during the transition, as well as no the need to empower the Somali national security forces through training, mentoring, infrastructure, equipment, sustainment and mobility — if those forces are to gradually and effectively fully take over security responsibilities of the country from AMISOM.

Prime Minister Hassan Ali Kheyre launched the Federal Government of Somalia's operational readiness assessment conference on 15 August in Mogadishu. The Federal Government of Somalia-led exercise, with the active participation of AMISOM, the United Nations, international partners and the Federal member states, is aligned with resolution 2372 (2107) and the aims and objectives of the comprehensive approach to security. Once it is completed, it is expected to yield a very credible picture of the current shape, size, capacities and state of health of the Somali national security forces — including their number — and to provide key steps to be undertaken for a responsible conditions-based transition of security responsibilities from AMISOM to the Somali security forces. That exercise is essential if we really want to undertake a transition that can preserve the gains so far with our joint material, financial and human effort.

AMISOM police has provided support to the ongoing verification of Somali police force strength. The exercises are still inconclusive. As a follow-up to the Federal Government/AMISOM conference on transitioning of security responsibilities from AMISOM to the Federal Government of Somalia in August, AMISOM and Somali national security forces commanders held a planning session for joint coordinated operations for the rest of 2017 and beyond to disrupt, degrade and contain Al-Shabaab and other armed groups, protect the population centres, open and secure main supply routes and undertake a realistic agreement on the handover of some forward-operating bases in Somalia.

As the Security Council is aware, the University of Mogadishu has already been handed over to the Somalis. The Somalis are expected to take over the Academy and four other operating bases. But, given the resources, we will not hand over those positions unless and until the Somalis themselves tell us that they are ready to take them. Meanwhile, in Addis Ababa, a few days ago, on 5 September, the Military Operations Coordination Committee for the African Union Mission in Somalia held its twenty-fourth meeting, at which it agreed on a way forward to implementing resolution 2372 (2017) in terms of an initial reduction, by 1,000 troops, of AMISOM's military personnel by December, as well as on AMISOM's new tasks. That exercise has already begun. We have identified the numbers of soldiers that will have to be cut from each contingent. The Committee also agreed to establish a team of experts to work on options, including a detailed plan for AMISOM's exit from Somalia in case the plan agreed on both in London and through the Joint Review

committee is not provided with the resources it needs for effective implementation.

The Security Council has stressed the importance of enhancing the predictability, sustainability and flexibility of AMISOM's financing. On 22 August, the Head of the United Nations Support Office in Somalia briefed potential donors on the status of the United Nations Trust Fund for AMISOM and the Somali National Army ahead of a donor conference scheduled for September. Of the $94.6 million raised for AMISOM through the Trust Fund, only $388,593 is available as uncommitted funds. Of the $52.2 million raised for the Somali National Army also through the Trust Fund, a balance of $3.8 million is available for the 10,600 troops who are supposed to operating alongside AMISOM.

Under the structures agreed on in London and followed by the United Nations-AU Joint Review, the role of strand 1 — of which AMISOM, with the Federal Government of Somalia, is co-leader — is to identify, organize, plan and execute activities aimed at mobilizing a concrete, commensurate, predictable and sustainable flow of material, technical and financial resources that will enable AMISOM, in close cooperation, coordination and complementarity with the Somali national security forces and partners, to undertake effective operations to further disrupt and destroy Al-Shabaab and other armed groups; protect population centres and enable reconciliation processes; open and secure main supply routes; support the capacity-building of the Somali national security forces, at various levels; facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance; support the speedy restoration and extension of State authority; and implement a gradual, conditions-based transition of security responsibilities from AMISOM to Somali institutions in a manner that ensures that the gains made against Al-Shabaab so far are not reversed.

In line with the comprehensive-approach security provisions and the national security architecture, that will entail a gradual strategic shift in AMISOM's operating methods from a leading to a supporting role, through our transitional planning, so that the Somalis can increasingly assume responsibility and play a greater leadership role in the building, delivery and sustainment of an environment of peace, security and enhanced stability in Somalia. It will also entail developing options and modalities through which predictable and sustainable funding for AMISOM can be effectively assured.

In conclusion, I have to insist that such predictable funding is central to AMISOM's ability to remain in Somalia and to the ability of both AMISOM and the AU to honour their obligations under resolution 2372 (2017). It is essential for us to be able to undertake the operations expected of us with responsibility, honour and in full respect for human life. The alternative is very gloomy. We may be forced to reconsider all our commitments if that funding is not available.

The President: I thank Mr. Madeira for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those Council members who wish to make statements.

Mr. Bermúdez (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): Uruguay would like to thank Mr. Michael Keating, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, and Mr. Francisco Caetano Jose Madeira, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of the African Union Mission in Somalia, for their detailed briefings.

Uruguay welcomes the renewed momentum generated by the London Conference on Somalia on 11 May, which will be key to various issues in the political process. We particularly appreciate the significant progress that has been made in the constitutional review process, with the presentation by the Federal Ministry of Constitutional Affairs to the international community of a preliminary comprehensive master plan aimed at completing the review within two years. Also at the London Conference, the Federal Government of Somalia committed to holding universal elections in 2021 and to establishing an electoral legal framework by the end of 2018.

In relation to those commitments, Uruguay commends the National Independent Electoral Commission for finalizing its five-year strategic plan for the period 2017 to 2021, which includes details of the electoral operations to be undertaken as well as a timeline for a constitutional referendum and universal elections. We consider it essential to ensure that Somalia moves towards positive change through reconciliation, reaffirming support to its sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and unity, so that it can become democratic, stable and prosperous.

Despite some improvements that have resulted from security measures taken by the Federal Government

of Somalia, and the continued efforts of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia and the African Union Mission in Somalia, the security situation in Mogadishu remains volatile. Uruguay condemns the continuing problems posed by the terrorist group Al-Shabaab, which is the main threat to peace and security in Somalia and which remains latent in the central and southern regions of the country despite the steps that have taken to combat it. Uruguay is particularly concerned about Al-Shabaab's readiness to resort to violence against civilians and humanitarian workers to hinder relief efforts. Progress on security-sector reform is urgently needed, and it is vital that the Federal Government of Somalia be the one to take ownership and lead the process.

Uruguay recognizes that the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) remains essential to guaranteeing security in Somalia in the medium term. The transition of AMISOM must be organized and supported in such a way as to mark the end of the international security presence in Somalia, without squandering the achievements of the past 10 years, as the Secretary-General rightly states in his report (S/2017/751).

Uruguay again emphasizes the need to protect civilian populations, especially women, children and the elderly. It encourages the Federal Government of Somalia to seek mediation and stability, especially in areas where access to supplies and humanitarian aid is vital. We are also interested in seeing respect for the civil rights of Somali women, with a view to ensuring their full participation in the country's political life.

Although all children associated with Al-Shabaab captured in Puntland have been released, the prison sentences of 40 of the children have not yet been rescinded. Uruguay joins the call made by the Secretary-General, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia and UNICEF and urges the authorities of Puntland to facilitate the liberation of these children and to continue working with the United Nations on their reintegration.

Uruguay remains alarmed by cases of sexual violence against internally displaced women and girls living in settlements for internally displaced persons. It is essential to improve the legal framework, the systems for the protection of human rights and the capacity and legitimacy of institutions to help combat impunity, improve accountability for human rights violations and thereby encourage reconciliation.

The President: I thank Mr. Bermúdez for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to the representative of Somalia.

Mr. Osman (Somalia): It is a great honour to be addressing the Security Council today on behalf of Somalia. I am delighted to be sharing our experiences with our key partners, all of whom have stood by our nation and our people in our greatest period of need.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General and his team, both in New York and in Somalia, for their committment to peace, stability and prosperity in Somalia.

As the Council is aware, Somalia successfully concluded a long and complicated election process on 8 February. That day, representatives of the Somali people voted for change and a new direction for our country when they elected President Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo. We are also aware of the enormous public support received by the Federal Government following the election. However, we should be very aware of the high expectations of the Somali people following the election of President Farmajo and the subsequent appointment of Prime Minister Hassan Ali Kheyre, in the areas of improving security and providing basic services such as health and education. Although the Federal Government is working tirelessly to meet everyone's expectations, the immediate hope is to gradually improve the lives of our citizens.

Despite the enormous challenge we face, Somalia is striving for lasting security to ensure that our country may remain at peace with itself and with the global community. We believe that the only way for Somalia to fully recover is to strengthen its democratic institutions. To that end, President Farmajo's Government will spare no effort in working towards the promise at the heart of his election campaign to fight Somalia's three major enemies: terrorism, corruption and poverty.

The Federal Government focuses on getting the politics right. We believe that good politics must be inclusive, participatory, vibrant and practiced on a level playing field. In that regard, the Federal Government is committed to solidifying the federal system of governance, which has only been in place since 2004. Our overall vision is to achieve a strong and cooperative union that works for all Somali people

and enhances equity and good governance. Thankfully, we are a step closer to that objective, as illustrated by the historic formation of the new National Security Council, which includes Federal member states. The National Security Council is a platform for dialogue not only on security issues, but on broader matters of national importance too.

The Federal Government and Federal member states, along with other stakeholders, are currently engaged in an in-depth discussion on matters of national importance, including a dialogue on the sharing of natural and national resources. This and other issues will be discussed in the context of the constitutional review process. The leaders of Somalia recognize that the Constitution is a document that binds them together and serves as the foundational text upon which future decisions are built.

Security remains paramount for the Federal Government. The new national security architecture and the security pact provide the tools we need to strengthen the Somali National Army and introduce an improved policing model. Together with the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), we are confident that we can defeat Al-Shabaab in the next couple of years. Once we recover the remaining territories and secure supply routes, we will stabilize the country by building local administrations in collaboration with the Federal member states. We believe that communities are best placed to collaborate with the local, state and Federal Governments to stabilize the country.

However, the Federal Government cannot defeat Al-Shabaab without the necessary tools. For far too long, our security forces have been in combat with terrorist groups using the same light weapons — mostly AK-47s. Despite the bravery of our men and women in uniform, we were locked in asymmetrical battles with the terrorists. Without AMISOM forces, who are supplied with heavy weaponry, we would not have been able to defeat Al-Shabaab. The long-standing arms embargo on Somalia severely restricts our ability to procure heavy weapons, despite the partial lifting of the embargo in 2013. The time has come for Somalia to be granted access to qualitatively better weapons than the terrorists. In that regard, we are asking this organ, the Security Council, to consider and develop a clearly defined road map to grant the full lifting of the arms embargo. That would include improvements to our weapons management and our command-and-control systems.

In the Military Operations Coordination Committee meeting held on 5 September in Addis Ababa, AMISOM troop-contributing countries agreed to reduce troop numbers, as envisaged in resolution 2372 (2017). AMISOM will start planning for exit before May 2018 and is likely to complete its withdrawal in May 2018, if there is no predictable and sustainable funding arrangement beyond that date. My Government and the people of Somalia are grateful for the sacrifices made by AMISOM over the past 10 years to help to restore peace in Somalia.

AMISOM has done a great job. However, the Somali National Army (SNA) and the Somalia National Security Forces (SNSF) are still faced with many challenges, including a general lack of capacity and the effect of the arms embargo. The SNA and SNSF are not ready to take over security responsibilities in Somalia and the premature withdrawal of AMISOM in May 2018 may be a recipe for disaster. It is crucial that AMISOM be provided with predictable and sustainable funding beyond 31 May 2018.

When it comes to the assistance we have received in the security sector from our friends, we are grateful to all partners for their unwavering and sustained support over the years. Many provide financial support, while others provide technical and logistical support. One partner I would like to dedicate special gratitude to is AMISOM. Its peacekeeping forces have been working with us for the past 10 years — much longer than anyone expected. During that time, they have sacrificed many soldiers in the quest to help Somalia defeat Al-Shabaab and rebuild our security sector.

A vital element of rebuilding our security apparatus is to substantially improve coordination among international partners on the security front. We, the Federal Government of Somalia, welcome the genuine attempt to address this fundamental problem through the creation of the Comprehensive Assistance to Security group. This group, in close collaboration with the National Security Office, must end duplicity and fragmentation in the security-support sector. On our side, the National Security Council is designed to do the same.

For too long, the conventional wisdom has been that Somalia is a problem to fix and the people have become a perfect example due of humanitarian breakdown to the failure of the State to do its job. Today the Federal Government of Somalia is committed to seizing this

golden opportunity and to nurturing and delivering better service — a better, stronger and more prosperous Somalia led by the hopes and aspirations of its people. This is the best way to continue the process of changing the prevailing narrative.

Mr President, it is with your assistance and your support of the Federal Government-led security iniative that the darkest chapter of Somali history will come to a close. The Somali people are hopeful and their Government aims to meet their expectations with action.

As we are also aware, the Gu rainy season, which was between March and June, was late, in some areas was below the average and in many parts of Somalia resulted in an elevated risk of famine. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affaris estimated some time in February or March that 3.2 million people needed immediate assitance. While the war has been averted thanks to the help of our partners, the threat of famine has still persisted in the second half of this year. The Federal Government of Somalia remains extremely concerned about the humanitarian crisis. We appeal again to our international partners to help by providing us with additional funding to sustain the current level of humanitarian response and save the lives of many Somalis.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.8047

Security Council

Seventy-second year

Provisional

8047th meeting
Wednesday, 13 September 2017, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Alemu	(Ethiopia)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Inchauste Jordán
	China	Mr. Wu Haitao
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	France	Mrs. Gueguen
	Italy	Mr. Lambertini
	Japan	Mr. Kawamura
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Umarov
	Russian Federation	Mr. Nebenzia
	Senegal	Mr. Ciss
	Sweden	Mr. Skoog
	Ukraine	Mr. Ilnystskyi
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Ms. Sison
	Uruguay	Mr. Bermúdez

Agenda

Peace and security in Africa

Report of the Secretary-General on situation in the Lake Chad Basin region (S/2017/764)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Peace and security in Africa

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Lake Chad Basin region (S/2017/764)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Nigeria to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Jeffrey Feltman, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, and Ms. Fatima Shehu Imam, Director of the Network of Civil Society Organizations in Borno state.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome Ms. Imam, who is joining us via video teleconference from Maiduguri, Nigeria.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2017/764, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Lake Chad basin region.

I now give the floor to Mr. Feltman.

Mr. Feltman: I thank you, Mr. President, and the members of the Security Council for this opportunity to brief the Council on the Secretary-General's report (S/2017/764) on the situation in the Lake Chad basin. Allow me to comment first on security and political developments.

Thanks to coordination among affected countries, we have witnessed encouraging progress in the fight against Boko Haram. The Secretary-General commends the Governments of the region for their efforts, including through the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF). Without question, Boko Haram's combat capacity has diminished, but to compensate for that, Boko Haram has changed tactics by increasing the use of suicide attacks.

We thank the Government of Switzerland and the International Committee of the Red Cross for their efforts to the release of an additional 82 girls kidnapped from Chibok in the north-eastern part of Nigeria in 2014. The recent visit to Nigeria by the Deputy Secretary-General and the Executive Director of UN-Women served to shed further light on the plight of women and girls in the Lake Chad basin. Unfortunately the fight is far from over. One hundred and thirty attacks attributed to Boko Haram in the four affected countries in June and July resulted in 284 civilian fatalities — a significant increase as compared to 146 attacks and 107 civilian fatalities in April and May. The most affected countries remained Nigeria, followed by Cameroon, the Niger and Chad.

In terms of political advocacy, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa and his Special Representative for Western Africa and the Sahel, respectively, regularly visit the affected countries to promote enhanced interregional cooperation. They propose a regional strategy to address the root causes of the crisis. Such a strategy should be owned and supported by the affected countries as well as the relevant subregional organizations, including the Economic Community of Central African States, the Economic Community of West African States and the Lake Chad Basin Commission.

The Oslo Humanitarian Conference on Nigeria and the Lake Chad Region, held in February, and the visit by the Council in March brought needed attention to the long-neglected crisis in the Lake Chad basin. The United Nations and international partners are working to sustain the momentum generated by those events. Last week in Berlin, the United Nations participated in the first senior officials' meeting of the Oslo Consultative Group on Prevention and Stabilization in the Lake Chad Region. The meeting brought together representatives of the affected countries, donors and regional and subregional organizations. Discussions focused on addressing the structural causes of the crisis and included community stabilization, the restoration of services, local governance systems and the prevention of violence.

Turning to development challenges, I note that the Lake Chad basin crisis has wreaked havoc on basic infrastructure assets and Government services. Insecurity has sparked large-scale unemployment and left 1 million school-aged children deprived of education. The substantial economic impact of the crisis has reached nearly $9 billion across north-eastern Nigeria alone. Poverty, the low legitimacy of the State,

human insecurity and climate change, among other challenges, compound that dire situation. As is so often the case, women and the youth are key risk groups.

Conflict and displacement have eroded, and in some cases ruptured, the bonds between and within communities. Intra-communal structures and processes that traditionally regulated violence and resolved conflicts have weakened. We detect worrying signs of social fragmentation as tensions emerge from ethno-religious, social and other divisions, including between internally displaced persons (IDPs) and host communities. Unless robust peacebuilding efforts are introduced, the reintegration of ex-combatants, including from Boko Haram and vigilante groups, risk generating additional tensions and to heighten the risks of secondary conflict. Furthermore, the report notes the need for greater attention and funding to support development interventions, including community stabilization, economic revitalization and prevention, so as to build community resilience and ensure durable solutions.

Yesterday, Under-Secretary-General Lowcock of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs concluded his first visit to the Niger and Nigeria to increase international visibility of the humanitarian situation, discuss with the Governments and consider practical steps to further strengthen the response.

Despite the significant progress made in reaching the affected people in the Lake Chad basin, the humanitarian needs in the region continue to be staggering. Approximately 10.7 million people require humanitarian assistance. With 8.5 million people in need, north-eastern Nigeria is again enduring the worst of the crisis. Funding continues to fall significantly short. At present, the regional appeal requesting $1.5 billion for 2017 is funded at only 40 per cent.

The region now faces the rainy season, when food insecurity is at its worst, with thousands of farmers having missed four planting seasons in a row owing to conflict, resulting insecurity and displacements. Across the region, 7.2 million people are severely food insecure, including 5.2 million in north-eastern Nigeria, where an estimated 50,000 people are at the highest risk of famine. The crisis has displaced an estimated 2.4 million people, including 1.5 million children. New displacements are occurring alongside the return of IDPs and refugees. Given the continued insecurity and lack of basic services in many affected areas, the involuntary and unsafe return of refugees and IDPs must be avoided at all costs.

Concerning human rights, we are deeply concerned about the continued violations by Boko Haram, including killings, the forceful use of children as suicide bombers and sexual and gender-based violence against women and children. Perpetrators must be brought to justice. The United Nations has also received numerous allegations of serious human rights violations committed in the context of counter-terrorism operations. The United Nations continues to advocate strongly with MNJTF to put forward a clear strategy to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse, including by recruiting a dedicated gender adviser within its civilian component. The report notes our conviction that we must develop a common understanding that human rights violations are among the root causes of instability in the Lake Chad basin and that impunity will fuel the crisis. Investing in traditional justice mechanisms at the community level is essential to sustainable reconciliation and stability. The prevention of terrorist activities, stabilization and recovery initiatives must integrate the human rights dimension.

Sexual violence remains appallingly widespread in the region. It is a driver of forced displacement and a particular risk in displacement settings, in which conflict-affected women and children are exposed to daily risks of exploitation. Those suffering from acute physical or psychological trauma need urgent medical and psychosocial care. The United Nations is exploring options for the deployment of dedicated expertise on conflict-related sexual violence to north-eastern Nigeria.

The United Nations faces a serious funding shortage to deploy human rights monitors across the region. We reiterate our call on the international community to generously contribute funds to enable the United Nations to support the establishment of national and regional mechanisms for the systematic monitoring and reporting of the human rights situation.

Allow me to touch upon the issues of security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. The lack of a comprehensive approach in addressing Boko Haram defectors, including clear and transparent criteria that are human rights compliant and in line with the international terrorism framework, produces multiple challenges. Despite good faith, ad hoc efforts result in thousands of persons being irregularly

detained and/or unpredictably processed. This situation is not productive, sustainable or in accordance with the rule of law, and justice is not served.

In our view, the efforts of the MNJTF remain indispensable in resolving the crisis. However, the heavy financial investment borne by regional countries comes at a high cost: Governments have no choice but to divert much of their national budgets from development to addressing national and regional security. Within the United Nations, Member States are careful to make sure that we do not shift development and humanitarian funds to peace and security work. We would hope that the affected countries could attract the support to do the same. We welcome the pledges already made and encourage the further timely disbursement of contributions to enable the MNJTF to address the challenges it faces.

In conclusion, I note that the complex and increasingly protracted nature of the Lake Chad basin crisis calls for innovative and integrated solutions that bridge traditional divides between humanitarian and development strategies. The United Nations is committed to adopting a new way of working that will address the urgent needs of the affected populations and the root causes of the crisis in a coordinated and phased manner. I urge all partners to redouble their efforts to provide lifesaving humanitarian assistance to the affected populations, as well as early and longer-term recovery. That is the basis to build resistance and assure durable solutions to the crisis.

Once again, we encourage the affected countries to jointly elaborate a regional strategy to address the root causes of the crisis. We hope that the planned regional conference on stabilization to be held in N'Djamena in October will be the first step towards the development of such a strategy.

We in the United Nations remain committed to working with regional countries on ending the violence, protecting civilians, promoting human development and alleviating the suffering in the Lake Chad basin. We can prevent this crisis from growing, but that would require greater political and financial support to the Lake basin region. The side event to be held on 21 September at the margins of the General Assembly session will be a key opportunity for the international community to reaffirm its support for the region.

The President: I thank Mr. Feltman for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Imam.

Ms. Imam: I would like to begin by thanking the Ethiopian Ambassador, and President of the Security Council for this month, for inviting me to provide a civil society perspective as part of the Council's deliberations on the Lake Chad basin region.

I am Fatima Shehu Imam, the current Chairperson of the International Federation of Women Lawyers in Borno state. Today I also represent the Network of Civil Society Organizations in Borno state.

The Network is a coalition of more than 100 civil society, community and faith-based organizations engaged in a wide range of activities geared towards providing humanitarian aid and assistance to victims of the over four-year-long insurgency. In Borno state, where I live and work, families, livelihoods and communities have been repeatedly torn apart by insurgent activities of the Jama'atu Ahlus-Sunna Lidda'Awati Wal Jihad, otherwise known as Boko Haram. Borno state remains the epicentre of the Boko Haram insurgency.

In March this year, Council members met with me and other women-led civil society organizations during the Security Council mission to Maiduguri. Sadly, there has been no significant improvement in providing for protection needs or humanitarian assistance to the growing number of victims of the insurgency who have been displaced.

The non-participation of women in decision-making, peacebuilding processes, and in aid and relief delivery in camps remains a serious concern. Borno state currently hosts the highest number of internally displaced persons (IDP), who remain in need of urgent humanitarian protection and assistance owing to the level of insecurity in the State. The dire humanitarian conditions in north-east Nigeria are arguably brought on by the security challenges and the almost near-total collapse of societal and institutional apparatus of the Government, which has been unable to keep up with the increasing numbers of internationally displaced persons.

I wish to highlight the following key concerns we have identified in the context of the work we do as humanitarians, enumerate the main areas for urgent intervention and touch on the challenges we face as a coalition. I will then conclude with an appeal to the conscience of the Security Council.

On security, the general situation in and around Maiduguri remains tense and fragile. While there have been several reports forecasting improvements and gains by the Nigerian armed forces in the region, that progress has been grossly overestimated. That has left room for a false sense of security, which has also led to a resurgence of armed attacks on civilians and other soft targets in and around the state. People still live in fear in their communities, and many who have been displaced as a result of the insurgency are reluctant to return. That has resulted in poverty, a lack of food, malnutrition and a total collapse of economic activities within the region and the threat of famine.

Threats to the life and property of marginalized populations, especially women and girls, seem to be on the increase in the light of the resurgence of violent attacks. Local civil society organizations working on the ground, such as mine, are largely incapacitated in reaching out to large sections of those communities, including to women and girls who are in urgent need of humanitarian aid. Unlike international non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies, which are accompanied by security details during field operations, local groups are continuing to carry out their work unaccompanied by any form of security apparatus, thereby making access a major challenge and compromising the lives of individuals who engage in such operations.

There is continuing and clear abuse of the rights of individuals living in the camps in Maiduguri and surrounding areas. As have been detailed in numerous reports to the Council, there are severe shortages of food and other supplies. That has led to a situation where ther is a trade in sexual favours for food. From the various visits I have personally made to the IDP camps as part of my mandate to improve and promote the welfare and rights of women and children, it is pertinent to note that most of the women and girls in the IDP camps are ignorant of their basic human rights and, as such, do not even know when their rights are being violated. That is partly a result of culturally induced factors where women do not have a voice and, in a few cases, do not know where to go when violated. The insurgency has taken its toll on those women who are now heads of households and are compelled to give their bodies for food — which ultimately results in unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases — in the name of survival sex just to be able to provide for their family.

With regard to the women and girls who have been abducted by Boko Haram, women and girls have been used as targets in the recent trend of violent attacks perpetrated by insurgents in utilizing them as suicide bombers. The issue of stigmatization faced by those women and girls cannot be overemphasized. A case at hand is that of a married woman who was abducted by Boko Haram and returned after a few years with another child. Her husband is forcing her to choose between him and the child. The psychological trauma faced by that woman, and the many others who have lost their self-esteem as a result of stigmatization, needs to be urgently addressed. A sharper focus must be placed on women's reintegration, while tackling stigmatization and ensuring that they are part of the strategies aimed at addressing Boko Haram.

In terms of the threat to farming, the fragile state of security in the region has led to a situation where the normal lifestyles and customs of the population have been truncated. Due to inherent security challenges, members of some communities are afraid to go to their farms because it is risky to travel beyond a three-kilometre radius from their communities. About a week ago, 12 people were abducted from their farms and are yet to be found. Reports of such abductions are numerous, which is of course of great concern to my Network.

The Network faces myriad challenges, as do many civil society groups, that affect our ability to deliver the lifesaving work we are trying to carry out. Those challenges cover, but are not limited to, operations, such as funding, institutions, policy and law and security.

There currently appears to be more rigidity than flexibility in the level of donor funding available for humanitarian assistance, thereby creating a situation whereby highly professional and experienced institutions, such as United Nations agencies and international NGOs, are expected to access funding based on the same evaluation criteria. Those quite clear and noticeable differences in terms of institutional capacity undoubtedly impedes the availability of funding opportunities available to smaller local groups in the field that carry out lifesaving interventions.

There is an urgent need to ensure that local civil society organizations and affected populations are critical components in the design and implementation of interventions. The fragile and tense situation still makes it extremely challenging and risky for local

groups to engage in operations in the field. As a result, those groups lack the accompanying security apparatus available to United Nations agencies and NGO colleagues.

Despite the extreme humanitarian situation in the country and the apparent global focus on Nigeria arising from the insurgency and the increasing number of people who have been displaced and are in need of protection and assistance, it might interest the Council to note that the country still lacks any comprehensive legislation and/or policy that holistically targets humanitarian responses. The result is that most of work currently being carried out is non-transparent and ad hoc, with no accountability mechanism.

In conclusion, while I am immensely grateful for the apportunity afforded to me to address the Security Council, I must reiterate the important role that perception plays in the context of humanitarian intervention and bringing hope. The perception on the ground today reflects the diminishing hope of the huge population affected by the conflict, as they believe responses to be insufficient, despite the huge funding allocation reported by the Government and development partners. I urge the Council to see this as an urgent and dire call — given the highlighted challenges and analysis of the situation, it should galvanize a strategic and adequate response mechanism to bring assistance and aid to the millions of people in need of protection and humanitarian assistance.

The President: I thank Ms. Imam for her briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Security Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Rycroft (United Kingdom): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Feltman for his valuable briefing and Ms. Imam for sharing her thoughts.

It was six months ago, in a dusty internally displaced person's camp in Maiduguri, that we heard Ms. Imam's testimony, together with those of many others. It really brought home to me, and probably to several of us who were there, the human cost of the crisis in the Lake Chad basin. It was therefore very good to hear from Ms. Imam again today. It is vital that the Security Council continue to hear from those most affected by the issues on our agenda and continue to use those analyses and from-the-heart interventions to inform our decision-making.

Sadly, as both Ms. Imam and the Secretary-General's report (S/2017/764) make clear, six months on from our visit to the Lake Chad basin, the situation remains deeply troubling. Boko Haram has indeed been degraded and territory has indeed been reclaimed, but Boko Haram is far from a spent force. It is down but not out, shifting its tactics from land grabs to opportunistic attacks. Maiduguri now faces weekly suicide attacks, many from girls who are forced into suicide bombing. Over 400 people have been killed since we visited. Boko Haram's shameful and sickening abductions of young women and girls continue unabated. Those who return continue to face stigma and discrimination, which is why the United Kingdom will host a ministerial event here on 18 September, in order to launch a new set of global principles to tackle such stigma.

The continuing barbarity is only exacerbating the humanitarian crises. Since we visited, the number of Nigerians seeking refuge in neighbouring countries has only marginally decreased, with nearly 2 million people still displaced in north-east Nigeria and over 8 million in need of urgent, lifesaving assistance. While the number of forced returns has fallen, we have seen thousands of people pressured back into areas where they do not feel safe. It is therefore clear that we should all redouble our efforts to implement the commitments that we made in resolution 2349 (2017).

The United Kingdom will play its part. We remain committed to partnering with Nigeria and its neighbours to degrade and defeat Boko Haram. We remain committed to helping people in need in the region, having scaled up our humanitarian support to $130 million this year. We have announced an additional $260 million over the next four years, as part of the north-east Nigeria transition to development programme.

We all need to play our part. The Nigeria Humanitarian Fund was launched in February with an appeal for $1 billion this year. As of last month, that appeal is less than half funded. As the Secretary-General's report makes clear, insufficient funding from the donor community continues to limit the provision of food aid, development and recovery activities.

Just as the international community must act, so too should Governments in the region. We look to the Government of Nigeria and affected countries to provide greater resources where they can and to further prioritize the humanitarian response. We also call on them to expedite all remaining registrations

for humanitarian organization in the region, as the Secretary-General's report notes.

We welcome the increased civil-military coordination in the humanitarian effort and urge that to continue. However, we deeply regret the raid on the United Nations red roof compound by the Nigerian military last month. Nevertheless, we do welcome the swift response by the authorities.

It is clear that a long-term solution will be found only by addressing the root causes that led to Boko Haram's emergence, which I think was the main lesson for many of us on our visit. That search for longer-term solutions and root causes requires a regional plan to address the political, economic, governance, transparency and accountability issues. If such an effort is to succeed, it must respect human rights. The ongoing reports of torture, arbitrary arrests and sexual exploitation are deeply concerning and must stop. We therefore support calls for greater funding to strengthen the United Nations monitoring presence on the ground.

Finally, the role of women in the crisis cannot be overlooked. We reiterate the Council's call for greater engagement between regional Governments, the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) and women's civil society, as well as the deployment of a gender adviser to the MNJTF.

In short, there is a lot more that all of us need to do. Six months on from our visit we cannot afford to lose focus. I hope that through briefings like the one we heard today from Ms. Imam and Mr. Feltman we will all be reminded of what is at stake, just as we were in Maiduguri.

Mr. Skoog (Sweden): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Feltman for his briefing. I would also like to thank Ms. Imam for sharing her important perspective with the Security Council. I agree that, in all of our work, we must endeavour to listen to the voices of those who are most affected. I did not have the opportunity to join the Council during its visit, so I am even more appreciative of Ms. Imam's very honest description, even in cases where she pointed to harshness and insufficiencies.

The challenges that face the Lake Chad basin region are multidimensional — a security crisis, a humanitarian emergency and development deficits. During its visit earlier this year, the Council had an opportunity to see how the interplay between those elements affects the lives of people in the region. Resolution 2349 (2017), adopted on our return, and to which today's briefing responds, was forward-looking and underlined our solidarity with, and full support of, the conflict-affected populations and the Governments in the region.

We commend the subregional, regional and international efforts being undertaken to mitigate the consequences of the Boko Haram insurgency. At the same time, we continue to be deeply concerned about the alarming scale of the humanitarian crisis. Despite progress in expanding the humanitarian response, it is clear that we still need to step up our efforts, while building on commitments made at the Oslo Humanitarian Conference in February. We must not let our attention to the situation wane. I would like to raise three points that we believe are critical to successfully responding to the challenges.

First, a holistic and regional approach is necessary. There are many root causes of instability and insecurity in the region, including climate change, economic fragility, marginalization, human rights violations and demographic challenges. Responding to the immediate security challenges must go hand in hand with development efforts that seek to address long-term instability by improving the daily lives of people on the ground.

We welcome the plans announced by the African Union Commission and the Lake Chad Basin Commission to hold a stabilization conference in early October. That meeting will present an important opportunity for countries to work together on the development of a regional strategy to address the root causes.

The effects of climate change and its links to stability and security are evident. We cannot hide from that reality if we want to truly address the challenges in the region. The lack of follow-up in this area in the Secretary-General's report (S/2017/764) serves once again to underline the need for improved risk assessment and risk-management strategies by the United Nations, as clearly highlighted by the Security Council in resolution 2349 (2017). The Council must remain alert to the threats to stability as a result of the adverse effects of climate change.

There is an inherent link between security, development and human rights. We agree with the Secretary-General's assertion that funding for United

Nations human rights monitoring tasks must be safeguarded. Nigeria's establishment of a judicial commission to review the compliance of its armed forces with human rights obligations and rules of engagement is a welcome development, and we call on all parties concerned to implement the Abuja Action Statement. We also encourage the swift deployment of the remaining civilian personnel to the Multinational Joint Task Force, not least adequate gender expertise.

The second point I would like to make is on the need for broad partnerships, particularly with the African Union (AU) and development actors. As shown by our visit to Addis Ababa last week, the Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council are united in our analysis of the situation and the required responses. In order to operationalize those responses, we should seize the momentum created through the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for an Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security.

Similarly, no sustainable peace can be achieved without effective partnerships spanning the humanitarian, reconstruction and development nexus. The Berlin meeting earlier this month underlined the need for early recovery, prevention and joint stabilization efforts. Complementarity and cooperation must be sought with a number of actors, including the International Financial Institutions (IFI).

My third point is on the role of women as agents of change. Women's empowerment cannot be overlooked in reconstruction and stabilization efforts. With the full, equal and effective participation of women at all levels of society, policies will be better adapted to realities on the ground, thereby creating better conditions for long-term stability and peace. I am particularly pleased that we have benefited from Ms. Imam joining us here today. Women from civil society can provide unique insights to underpin our discussions and decisions.

We are appalled by the finding in the Secretary-General's report that Boko Haram is increasingly resorting to suicide attacks, often carried out by forcibly recruited girls. That is why a key priority of Governments must be rehabilitation opportunities for children and their mothers, including the sensitization of communities to avoid stigmatization and to facilitate return. We also support the Secretary-General's call for the development of a strategy to engage women in the prevention of violent extremism, while taking into account the complexity of the categories that women fall into.

The adoption of resolution 2349 (2017) was an important acknowledgement of the many challenges facing the Lake Chad basin region and of the Council's commitment to supporting efforts towards long term and sustainable peace and development. We must not lose focus. We see three opportunities going forward.

First, we would welcome further information on the planning for the joint visit by the leaders of the United Nations, the AU and the IFIs, as requested in the resolution. Secondly, we would be interested in hearing from the United Nations system how the Security Council can best support the AU-Lake Chad Basin Commission stabilization conference. Finally, we look forward to the Secretary-General's report in October in response to the presidential statement on the risk of famine in Yemen, Somalia, South Sudan and north-east Nigeria (S/PRST/2017/14). This briefing will help add to our understanding of, and response to, the challenges being faced in the region and beyond.

Mr. Lambertini (Italy): First, let me thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting. I also thank Under Secretary-General Feltman for his comprehensive briefing to the Security Council this afternoon. Of course, I would also like to thank Ms. Fatima Shehu Imam for her insightful perspective. Just like Mr. Rycroft, I have fond memories of the meeting with her and her colleagues on a very hot, dusty morning in the internally displaced persons camp in Maiduguri. That was an important visit by the Security Council — its first in many years to a region that has been affected by a crisis for many years. But the news that we receive weekly, if not daily, from Maiduguri shows that the crisis is far from ending, and we therefore need to maintain our focus on the region.

In that regard, over the past several months the Council has devoted considerable attention to the Lake Chad basin region and, as proof of that, the situation was most recently discussed during the annual United Nations-African Union joint consultative meeting. The crisis involving the Lake Chad basin and the territory of four countries is one of the world's largest humanitarian emergencies, with several million people in need of assistance. During our visit to the region, we became directly aware of just how urgently we need to act to strengthen our response in confronting the challenges in the region. While catalysed by the

Boko Haram insurgency, the crisis is multidimensional. Its root causes include climate change, poverty and underdevelopment — issues that people in the region have been tackling for many years, if not decades.

As the international community came together in Oslo to provide the humanitarian relief that was desperately needed, it is essential that the underlying causes of vulnerability in the Lake Chad basin region also be urgently addressed, lest dependence upon external assistance will be prolonged for many years to come. As a result of the commitments made at the Oslo Humanitarian Conference, Italy continues to contribute bilaterally through United Nations agencies, by funding projects aimed at promoting and strengthening the resilience of the local population while reducing the risk of internal displacement and migration.

While the Niger remains among the priority countries of our cooperation, we are about to launch a programme that will extend our priority on a regional basis. The project will have a longer duration, with the specific aim of sustaining youth using a wide range of tools — cash for work, microloans and on-the-job training. I would also like to mention Italy's commitment to sustaining a national development programme, recently presented in Paris by the President of Chad, Idriss Déby Itno, with a financial contribution of between €20 to €30 million. Furthermore, in the framework of the Secretary-General's famine response strategy in the Lake Chad basin region, we have already disbursed our financial pledge.

As highlighted comprehensively in the report by the United Nations Development Programme launched last week, a lack of resources, marginalization and weak governance are the primary forces driving young Africans to violent extremism. The situation in the Lake Chad basin region serves as a powerful reminder of the relationship between climate change, insecurity, population growth, unmet humanitarian needs and the risk of radicalization. A crisis of this magnitude affects all of us, because it forces the mass displacement of people and fosters conditions for illicit activities such as human trafficking and smuggling. It also underlines our responsibility in the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which was also created to prevent and mitigate the impact of these kinds of emergencies.

In that context, respect for human rights must be guaranteed by any means. Abuse against women or children or carrying out attacks against schools or hospitals cannot be tolerated wherever, whenever or by whomsoever it is committed. In that regard, we would like to reiterate the fundamental role of women in preventing potential conflicts and strengthening the process of national conciliation by ensuring a gender-inclusive perspective on issues of security, justice and governance. We commend the United Nations and the African Union for having devoted to a country of the Lake Chad region the first-ever joint high-level mission focused on womens' meaningul participation in peace, security and development. We support a regional, integrated and comprehensive approach to effectively address the security, economic, social and judicial dimensions of the crisis. We welcome the announcement of the October conference to be held in N'Djamena.

We also commend the initiatives taken by the African Union and the Lake Chad Basin Commission. The dimensions of this crisis are broad, interregional and interconnected with instability in the Sahel. The terrorist threat and the scourge of trafficking in persons, drugs and arms are spreading across the whole region. I would like to commend the efforts carried out by the countries of the region to provide stability and security, as in the case of the Multinational Joint Task Force and the Group of Five for the Sahel (G-5 Sahel).

I would also like to recall the important role played by the European Union (EU), one of the key partners of the region. The multidimensional action of the EU encompasses security, political and development cooperation and is based on an integrated paradigm of policies that consider the Lake Chad region and the Sahel as a whole geographical continuum. At the regional level, we strongly support the efforts of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa and of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel, as well as initiatives such as the G-5 Sahel force and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development peace and security strategy. These are important steps towards a more proactive role for regional organizations and charting a path towards peace, security and development.

Mr. Ciss (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): The Senegalese delegation welcomes the holding of this Security Council meeting on the situation in the Chad Lake basin, exactly six months after our visit to the region and following the adoption of the resolution 2349 (2017), which was devoted to this topic. My delegation would also like to thank Under-Secretary-General

Jeffrey Feltman for providing clarity in his presentation on the Secretary-General's report (S/2017/764), which informs us of progress made and challenges yet to be met. We would also like to convey our gratitude to Ms. Fatima Shehu Imam, Director of the Network of Civil Society Organizations in Borno state, for having so kindly shared with us her experience in the field.

In adopting resolution 2349 (2017) following our visit to Cameroon, the Niger, Nigeria and Chad, the Security Council again focused on the humanitarian and security crisis raging in the Lake Chad basin as a key priority of the international community. Following the visit, international mobilization in support of the region has considerably increased with the successive visits by representatives of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel, Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed, the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and by staff of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa. Along the same lines, a regional conference will be held in N'Djamena from 3 to 5 October on the issue of stabilizing the region. It will be the first meeting of a set of three aimed at determining a regional strategy to stabilize affected regions. I am sure that such international mobilization has contributed to the retaking of territory by the Joint Multinational Task Force, and I pay tribute to the courage and devotion of its contingents. The retaking of areas formerly controlled by Boko Haram has led to an improvement in the security situation in those areas, the freeing of hostages and, of course, the surrender or arrest of many of the group's combatants. On the humanitarian level, we should note the growing access of the civilian population to health care, sanitation and food.

However, as important as it is, all of that progress should not mask the difficult situation experienced by millions of women and children in the Lake Chad Basin region — as seen in the growing number of terrorist attacks in the past few months. Once again, on behalf of my country, I condemn those attacks in the firmest possible terms.

According to the Secretary-General's report, 245 attacks were carried out, most of those by female suicide bombers, during the months of June, July and August — in the north-east of Nigeria, in the north of Cameroon and in the Chad border regions, resulting in 225 casualties. While those attacks clearly bear witness to the ability of Boko Haram to continue its terrorist activities, the fact that the group is now increasingly resorting to asymmetrical tactics is undeniable proof that it is now in an unfavourable position. Nevertheless, we continue to deplore the lack of logistical resources available to the countries in the region in their fight against those asymmetric threats. All of that clearly shows the pressing need to bolster the capabilities of the States of the region in terms of early warning and rapid response sytems when faced with suicide attacks. That requires the involvement of the population to develop a community police force.

Similarly, regional and subregional cooperation remains crucial to securing borders in order to effectively combat trans-national organized crime, such as arms-smuggling and human trafficking, which, we must remember, are at heart of the crisis. There is also a need to step-up international support to meet the needs set out in the humanitarian appeal launched by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs which calls for the mobilization of $1.5 billion — of which, unfortunately, to date has been funded only the level of 30.9 per cent.

We should not make any mistake about it: development must be part of the solution, especially since poverty is most rife in the areas severely impacted by Boko Haram in the four countries concerned. That is why my delegation welcomes the meeting of the Oslo contact group — made up of Germany, Nigeria, Norway, Cameroon and Chad — scheduled for 6 September on the issues of prevention and stabilizing the region, which aims to identify ways to tackle the deep-rooted causes of the crisis.

In that regard, in order to make it possible for the countries concerned to effectively take the steps needed on the security and humanitarian fronts in order to meet the most difficult challenge — stabilizing the region and ensuring development — Senegal believes that the following important areas merit particular attention.

First, there is a need to foster private investment, which is essential to creating jobs, especially for young people, who remain the primary target of terrorist recruiters. We must also promote private investment so as to reduce the heightened dependence of the region's population on agriculture, livestock rearing and fishing.

Secondly, there is also a need for particular attention to addressing environmental challenges, for example, the drying up of Lake Chad, which, as we all know, has a very negative effect on agriculture in the region.

Thirdly, it is important to bear in mind the need to empower women both in the economic and political fields, with a view to reducing their vulnterability and augmenting their contribution to development.

Lastly, reducing the high level of dependence of the affected countries on oil and other mineral resources remains a priority. This step is necessary to avoid adverse budgetary consequences as a result of the drop in oil prices.

In conclusion, I would like to underline the urgent need to bolster the coordination of local, national, regional and international efforts in order to ensure the effectiveness of our collective action against Boko Haram. I pledge the full support of Senegal in that endeavour — one of the most important for the continent.

Mr. Bermúdez (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Jeffrey Feltman and Ms. Fatima Shehu Imam for their briefings.

We welcome the holding of this meeting, which once again allows us to exclusively address the situation in the Lake Chad basin. It undoubtedly gives greater visibility to a grave crisis with relatively little media coverage. The multidimensional character of the Lake Chad basin crisis forces us to address all of its causes simultaneously, jointly and in an interconnected manner. The security, humanitarian and human rights situations, as well as the effects of climate change and socioeconomic stagnation in the region, call for comprehensive attention if we are to responsibly tackle the crisis. We commend the efforts of the Lake Chad basin countries to address these challenges even with limited capabilities and resources. In that regard, we acknowledge the important role of international partners and United Nations agencies that promote the mobilization of regional resources.

The security efforts of the Multinational Joint Task Force in the fight against Boko Haram, which have made important progress, are laudable. They serve as a clear example that coordinated regional efforts are crucial in crises of this nature, where those who undermine stability know no borders or countries and, worse still, violate the fundamental human rights of whole communities — particularly women, girls and children. Similarly, the creation of the Group of Five for the Sahel joint force will also provide a significant boost to regional efforts in the fight against terrorism.

However, there is concern about the repeated allegations of human rights violations committed by the Task Force and the security forces of the Lake Chad basin countries. In that regard, Uruguay urges that all security activities, including those in the fight against terrorism, be carried out in strict compliance with the standards of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, and calls for all due process guarantees to be provided to the alleged victims of such violations.

The situation of women in the Lake Chad basin merits particular attention given their vulnerability, mainly due to Boko Haram's actions. We note with great concern the systematic use of sexual violence as a terrorist tactic, as evidenced by the abduction and sexual abuse of thousands of women and girls at the hands of that terrorist group, as well as the increasing use of female suicide bombers, infamously known as women bombers or girl bombers.

On the other hand, very little information is available regarding the impact of gender in a complex humanitarian crisis, nor regarding the role that women's participation and leadership and gender equality considerations play in peace efforts, such as the struggle against violent extremism, the restoration of State authority and the protection of human rights. In that regard, my delegation identifies several key areas that require special attention, such as assistance in addressing the stigma of victims of sexual violence and their children; the provision of sexual and reproductive health services and education in the field; and ensuring that national and regional strategies recognize survivors of sexual violence as victims of terrorism so that they can benefit from comprehensive and adequate assistance.

The Lake Chad basin has for many years witnessed a multifaceted and structural crisis, which must be addressed by identifying activities that not only mitigate the terrorist threat and provide food to the needy population, but also promote long-term stability. That message was clearly transmitted to Heads of State, ministers and senior officials during the mission of the Security Council in the Niger, Cameroon, Chad and Nigeria in March.

It is therefore crucial and imperative that the Governments of the four countries impiement public policies that prioritize the allocation of resources to address the structural causes of the crisis and promote activities aimed at improving health services, education,

job creation and the resilience of communities with a view to improving their ability to adapt and respond to such disastrous developments.

Mr. Aboulatta (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): I am delighted, at the outset, to thank the Under-Secretary-General for the briefing pursuant to resolution 2349 (2017). I also wish to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2017/764) and Ms. Imam for her briefing.

The Lake Chad basin region has witnessed genuine progress in the fight against terrorist group Boko Haram. First of all, many regions have been recovered by Nigerian so Boko Haram no longer has such a strong hold over so much territory, and many members of Boko Haram have also been arrested. We commend the efforts of the States of the region to overcome their challenges despite their lack of resources. They are clearly taking this multidimensional crisis seriously, and we are seeing greater cooperation among them. Significant national efforts have also been made, particularly in the legal sphere, where there is greater cooperation and where measures are being taken to respect human rights, to allow refugees to return to their homes and to free many young women kidnapped by Boko Haram.

The States of the region are today a model to be emulated. Indeed, the humanitarian crisis is being managed diligently and humanitarian aid has reached the affected regions rather seamlessly. Additionally, significant financial contributions have been made to the region, primarily to benefit refugees. Nevertheless, we are concerned about the humanitarian crisis in north-eastern Nigeria, where 5.2 million people are affected by a humanitarian crisis that today is looking very much like a famine. That is why we call on donors to honour the commitments they undertook in Oslo early this year to avoid a full-blown humanitarian disaster. We call on the various international and regional humanitarian organizations to redouble their efforts to address and combat the crisis. We are also deeply grateful to the Secretary-General, who has spared no effort to raise early awareness of the signs of this crisis this year and to mobilize the funding needed to address it.

We strongly condemn any act that violates human rights, including barbaric actions by Boko Haram against the civilian population of the States in the Lake Chad region, and especially violations against women and girls, and the devastation wrought on schools, hospitals and Nigeria's medical and educational infrastructure in general. We demand that all the perpetrators and their supporters be brought to justice and that they do not enjoy impunity.

In that context, we would like to note that, despite the achievements by the Multinational Joint Task Force in combating Boko Haram, the Force still needs more support from the international community in restoring stability in the Lake Chad region. We urge all the international and regional partners concerned to provide more support to the Task Force at every level, including equipment, training, logistics and capacity-building. We call on international partners to make good on the commitments they announced at the donor conference held in Addis Ababa on 1 February 2016 with regard to launching an African fund to support the Multinational Joint Task Force.

Mrs. Gueguen (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank Under-Secretary General Jeffrey Feltman and Ms. Fatima Shehu Imam, Director of the Network of Civil Society Organizations in Borno state, for their briefings.

France is encouraged by the recent progress that has been made in the fight against Boko Haram in the Lake Chad basin region. We commend the joint efforts of the countries of the region in that regard and the central role that the Multinational Joint Task Force has played. However, the terrorist threat continues to weigh on the countries and peoples of the region, as the tragic record of the many recent attacks shows. We firmly condemn the serious human rights violations that are being committed against children. Children are killed and mutilated every day; they are victims of sexual violence or of attacks on schools and hospitals; they are recruited as child soldiers. The growing use of children in suicide attacks and the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war are disgusting and a source of concern and indignation that should haunt our consciences.

The countries of the region continue to mobilize in response to the terrorists' violence, with the support of the international community. It is the Security Council's responsibility to provide support to the African States that have been uniting at the regional level to fight terrorism. France is playing a full part in that effort through the logistical and intelligence support that Operation Barkhane is giving the Multinational Joint Task Force. We have also been providing bilateral support to the armies of the region against Boko Haram, totalling more than €30 million since 2015, and we expect the rest of the international community

to take part in that effort as well. The countries of the region, quite rightly, have major expectations for United Nations involvement, as we saw last week in the Council's recent consultations with the African Union Peace and Security Council, and we must not disappoint them.

That international support for the efforts of the countries of the region goes hand in hand with certain responsibilities. In particular, the fight against terrorism must not admit violations of human rights of any kind. We therefore expect the countries of the Multinational Joint Task Force to act in full respect for the relevant provisions of international law. The measures that have already been taken to deal with this issue are steps in the right direction. Lastly, we deplore the delay in disbursing the €31 million in funds that the European Union allocated to the African Union a year ago. It should be used to equip the regional force that, owing to inadequate equipment, has been unable to effectively pursue the Boko Haram fighters who have taken refuge on the islands of Lake Chad during the current rainy season.

The response to the crisis in the Lake Chad basin region is not just a security matter. If we are to achieve a lasting solution to it, we must pay close attention to the humanitarian and development challenges and to the protection of civilians. The first point to make is that the gravity of the continuing humanitarian emergency in the region must compel us to strengthen our efforts to support the countries that are on the front lines in the fight against terrorism and that are hosting a considerable number of refugees. Given the size of the needs to be met, it is crucial to ensure a comprehensive approach and improve coordination between donors. If United Nations action is to be truly effective, it can come only in the form of support to the efforts of the countries of the region. In that regard, the tripartite mechanism established between Cameroon, Nigeria and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is an important step forward that we should welcome.

It is also essential that all the countries concerned ensure that United Nations and humanitarian personnel have unhindered, safe access wherever people are in need of emergency assistance. Lastly, we are particularly worried about the risk of famine, particularly in north-eastern Nigeria, where more than 5.2 million people, including 450,000 children, are suffering from severe food insecurity. This situation, which is the result of the insecurity produced by Boko Haram, is not inevitable and should compel us to take action, which is why France took the initiative of convening an Arria-formula meeting on the issue in June, and why the Council has asked the Secretary-General for a specific briefing on it in October, under France's presidency of the Council.

The second point I have to make is that the fight against terrorism must go hand in hand with a tireless effort to promote the protection of civilians. That includes ensuring the continued security of populations dealing with Boko Haram and supporting the voluntary and lasting return of displaced persons and refugees where security conditions permit. We also have to come up with concrete, immediate answers to the issue of women who are refugees or displaced, about which they should be fully consulted.

My third and last point is that, in grappling with the multifaceted security, humanitarian and economic crisis in this region, the only possible approach is one that engages with the virtuous circle of development. If we are to succeed, we must tackle the security, humanitarian and development challenges head on and in a complementary way. It would be an illusion to imagine that we can defeat terrorism without eradicating extreme poverty and malnutrition or improving education and employment for young people. That is why France has maintained its financial effort by contributing €14.5 million in humanitarian aid in 2017 and implementing a Lake Chad initiative for the empowerment of refugees and displaced populations amounting to a commitment of €36 million.

Conversely, it will not be possible to give development genuine momentum if we do not defeat Boko Haram. We encourage the States of the region and the Multinational Joint Task Force to pursue their coordinated military efforts to combat the two branches of this terrorist group. Reconciliation must begin, and we urge States to initiate political processes aimed at encouraging combatants to surrender by establishing a clear legal framework and reintegration programmes. The only way to succeed, therefore, is to take an approach that combines all the tools available to the United Nations in the service of a comprehensive strategy that is fully aligned with the reform of the Organization that the Secretary-General is working on.

I would like to conclude by reminding the Council once again that the Lake Chad region has not always received the attention it deserves from the international community. The Council's visit to the region in March

enabled us to begin to redress that mistake and initiate a new dynamic in that regard. It is important that this issue remain a priority in the long term for both the Council and the international community, and France pledges its support in this respect.

Mr. Wu Haitao (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I wish to thank Under-Secretary-General Jeffrey Feltman and Ms. Imam for their briefings.

China has been closely following developments in the Lake Chad basin and appreciates the firm commitment shown and the unremitting efforts made by the countries of the region in the fight against terrorism. China welcomes the formation of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) and its positive progress in the joint operations against terrorism.

At present, the Lake Chad basin region is plagued by terrorist and violent extremist activities and the threats posed by transnational organized crimes, including trafficking in arms, drugs and human beings, and the security situation there remains precarious. Meanwhile, the countries of the region face the grave challenges posed by the humanitarian crisis, with massive displacement of civilians in dire need of humanitarian assistance, including food and medicine. The United Nations and the international community must closely follow developments in the Lake Chad basin and jointly help the countries of the region to respond to the current challenges.

First, effective measures must be taken to ease the humanitarian crisis in the Lake Chad basin. The countries of the region and subregion and their peoples have hosted large numbers of internally displaced persons, and the international community should lend a helping hand. China has promptly responded to the crisis through bilateral and multilateral channels, providing emergency food assistance to the countries of the region, including Nigeria and Chad. We call on the international donors to honour their humanitarian assistance commitments as soon as possible and to continue to provide the countries of the region with massive assistance in terms of improving food security and medical care.

Secondly, support should be given to the countries of the region in their efforts to fight terrorism. Counter-terrorism in Africa is an important component of the international counter-terrorism struggle and has made a significant contribution thereto. The international community should support African countries in seeking African solutions to African problems, on the basis of respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the countries of the region, helping them to enhance their counter-terrorism capacity and providing them with assistance in the areas of funding, equipment and technology training support so as to support the MNJTF in carrying out effective operations.

Thirdly, we should take a longer-term perspective on this problem and focus on providing assistance to the countries of the region in upgrading their capacities in the area of economic and social development. The United Nations should scale up its contribution to post-conflict reconstruction and economic development and effectively improve living standards, thereby eliminating the breeding ground for conflict and terrorism.

We hope that the countries of the region will strengthen their coordination with the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States, the Economic Community of Central African States and the Lake Chad Basin Commission and jointly respond to the challenges.

The international community should better align the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with the African Agenda 2063 so as to achieve lasting peace and development as early as possible in Africa.

China has maintained close political and economic relations with the Lake Chad basin countries, actively providing assistance in their economic and social development. China will continue to pursue an Africa policy based on sincerity, practicality, affinity, good faith, justice and shared interests, fully implementing all of the outcomes of the Johannesburg Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation.

China stands ready to work with the international community and the countries of the region to support Central and West African countries in achieving lasting peace and common prosperity and to make a new contribution to peace and development in Africa.

Mr. Ilnytskyi (Ukraine): I should like to join other speakers in expressing our gratitude to all of today's briefers for their important inputs into our discussion.

In March, the Security Council, following its visit to the Lake Chad basin, adopted resolution 2349 (2017), which was a timely and dedicated instrument for responding to the complex crisis in the region.

The Lake Chad Basin region continues to endure a dire humanitarian and security situation. Extreme poverty, severe food insecurity, weak governance, climate change and the destructive activities of Boko Haram all contribute to this disastrous state of affairs.

Boko Haram continues to pose a threat to the civilian population in the region. Like a drowning man grasping at a straw, terrorists resort to the use of all available means, including suicide attacks. This only proves that they are losing their combat capacity. In this regard, we commend the efforts of the Multinational Joint Task Force and other actors that are fighting this terrorist group. But the countries of the region need additional support from the international community to prevail in this fight once and for all.

The United Nations and other relevant partners should continue their efforts in helping the Force prevent and address violations of international human rights and humanitarian law in the context of their military operations. In this regard, we commend the efforts of the relevant United Nations entities that are working closely in the region towards the establishment of a human rights due diligence policy framework.

Without such an instrument, the countries of the Lake Chad basin will face additional obstacles with regard to the deradicalization and reintegration of former Boko Haram combatants, as well as to reconciliation.

To ensure lasting peace in the areas liberated from Boko Haram, the Governments of the Lake Chad basin region need to rebuild critical infrastructure, restore a State presence and grant unimpeded access to humanitarian actors. The absence of governmental involvement in these areas would mean that people would continue to be compelled to leave their homes and seek support and assistance in neighbouring countries or, much worse, join the ranks of terrorists.

Another question that requires our attention is the need for the Lake Chad basin countries to ensure the full implementation of their commitments in the area of the protection of internally displaced persons (IDPs). We are concerned by the news that some countries continue to undertake forced returns of IDPs. Refugees should return to their homes only voluntarily, once they are sure that it is safe to leave the camps. If not, we are risking the creation of frequent back-and-forth movements across the borders and other areas of the region.

At the same time, we are encouraged by the efforts of the Lake Chad basin Governments in responding to the needs of the peoples affected, including those in Nigeria. It is paramount that the region and the international community be able to provide the urgently needed support to the 10.7 million people across the Lake Chad basin.

Last but not least, in resolution 2349 (2017) the Council recognized the adverse effects of climate change and ecological challenges among other factors affecting the stability of the region, and emphasized the need for adequate risk assessments and risk-management strategies by the Governments of the region and the United Nations. The issue of climate change was also dealt with by the Council at the Arria-Formula meeting on the security implications of climate change, which was organized by Ukraine in April.

In this regard, we look forward to seeing this problematic issue discussed in the upcoming reports of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Lake Chad basin region.

Ms. Sison (United States of America): I wish to thank Under-Secretary-General Feltman for his briefing. I thank also Ms. Fatima Shehu Imam for joining us; it is good to hear from her. It was very good to have met her on the Council's trip earlier this year to Maiduguri, and I thank her for the important work she does in north-east Nigeria. The contributions of civil society are so very critical.

The Lake Chad Basin is one of Africa's most pressing challenges. For years the United States has strongly supported efforts to eradicate the terror perpetrated by Boko Haram and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham (ISIS), and this fight is far from over. But all of us in the Security Council must recognize that a military solution alone will not bring sustainable peace to the Lake Chad basin.

Although the counter-terrorism mission is vital, we also need to support the stabilization and development of liberated areas and demand respect for human rights and accountability for human rights abuses and violations for all perpetrators. That is why, following the Council's trip to the region, we adopted resolution 2359 (2017) and its mandate for the Secretary-General to regularly report on the situation in the Lake Chad basin so that the Council can respond to the grave circumstances faced by so many in the region.

This first report (S/2017/764) is an important step in that regard, and we are committed to ensuring that the region remains on the Council's agenda. Discussing the situation in the Lake Chad basin in the Security Council should not be at all controversial. Boko Haram and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham (ISIS) are clear and present threats to international peace and security. We have seen unspeakable human rights abuses committed in the Lake Chad basin. The region is on the brink of famine, and we still do not have unfettered humanitarian access to those in need. It is therefore long past time for the Council to step up its involvement. Boko Haram persists in its brutal tactics and human rights abuses.

The United States is deeply troubled by the increase in attacks and deaths that we have observed at the hands of Boko Haram and ISIS since the adoption of resolution 2359 (2017) earlier this year. In June and July alone, according to the United Nations, 60 female suicide bombers have launched attacks across Borno state. Hundreds of civilians have been killed this year. There is a long way to go to defeat Boko Haram and ISIS in the Lake Chad basin, and that is why the United States is deeply committed to its partnerships across the region to eradicate those groups and to stop the senseless violence.

As we discovered during the Council's trip in March in the course of our meetings with women and girls in Maroua, Cameroon, and Maiduguri, Nigeria, that conflict, like so many others, has a disproportionate impact on women and girls — a point that Ms. Imam just underscored for us. The fact that Boko Haram increasingly relies on young girls to commit suicide attacks is the clearest example. We were so struck by that terrible reality during our trip. Just as those girls lives where beginning, they were abused and brainwashed to commit the most unspeakable of acts, thereby cutting short their all-too-brief lives and those of the innocent victims around them.

There is no question that Boko Haram and ISIS must be destroyed, but success against those groups requires more than a simple show of force. The most successful counter-terrorism campaigns are those that adhere to international humanitarian law, respect the human rights of all citizens and hold violators of human rights accountable. We therefore remain troubled by reports of regional security forces using inhumane and brutal tactics or failing to distinguish terrorist combatants from civilians. Failing to uphold and protect human rights or hold security forces accountable only serves to boost the recruitment efforts of the very terrorists whom we seek to eradicate. Regional Governments must ensure that their security forces protect civilians and uphold their fundamental human rights. There must be a better way to both investigate and prevent those and other abuses from happening.

We were concerned to read in the Secretary-General's report about the delayed opening of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Chad to enhance regional monitoring and reporting. We believe that the Council should consider mandating a formal OHCHR mission to visit the region to report first-hand on abuses by all parties. But the challenges in this conflict do not end when areas are liberated from Boko Haram and ISIS. In those areas, local authorities need to quickly restore the basics: the rule of law, respect for human rights and basic services. That is how we can all ensure that groups like Boko Haram and ISIS do not return. Such efforts to restore local governance deserve strong international support. Governments in the Lake Chad basin also need to establish the conditions for millions of internally displaced persons and Nigerian refugees to voluntarily return to their homes in safety and dignity.

We echo the Secretary-General's call on Nigeria and Cameroon to work with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to achieve the full implementation of the tripartite agreement to ensure no forced returns of refugees, and call upon all other Governments to avoid any involuntary or unsafe returns of those displaced. The United States remains committed to supporting the Governments of the Lake Chad basin in meeting those very difficult challenges. We have contributed over $640 million to the international humanitarian response in the Lake Chad basin since October 2015, of which more than two-thirds was provided this past year alone.

Many other countries have stepped up to provide assistance to the region, including the Niger's $4.4 million-dollar contribution to its own national appeal. We commend those pledges, but more must be done. We would therefore urge all Member States to examine ways in which they can support counter-terrorism, the humanitarian response in all the affected countries, economic development, human rights and stabilization in the region.

The United States will continue supporting regional leadership and the people of the Lake Chad basin in their arduous efforts to rid the region of Boko Haram and ISIS and establish stability, good governance and prosperity. We urge our fellow Council members and the entire United Nations system to continue focusing our collective attention and efforts on the region and its challenges.

Mr. Umarov (Kazakhstan): We thank Under-Secretary-General Feltman for his informative briefing and welcome Director Imam to our deliberations.

The visit of members of the Security Council to the countries of the Lake Chad basin enabled us to learn more about the Multinational Joint Task Force, as well as the humanitarian situation. That will help in devising a future comprehensive strategy focused on addressing the root causes and the socioeconomic dimension of the crisis. The measures of the Multinational Joint Task Force and the national armies of Cameroon, Chad, the Niger and Nigeria have resulted successfully in combating Boko Haram. Notwithstanding those gains, much needs to be accomplished. To fight Boko Haram, we have to robustly strengthen the framework of integrated assistance for countering terrorism for the joint force of the Group of Five for the Sahel. Resolving the humanitarian situation requires the resettlement of displaced people and refugees and immediately addressing the level of critical food insecurity. Returning to villages of origin is vital to beginning a new life and restarting agriculture to avert a potential famine.

Access to areas remains a challenge, despite efforts to overcome them, and therefore the establishment of humanitarian assistance in Nigeria and other measures should be supported. It will also be essential to implement the tripartite agreement between Cameroon, Nigeria and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to manage the voluntary return of refugees across the countries' borders.

Care for the half-million children suffering from severe, acute malnutrition and disease should be administered in the light of destroyed health facilities. The detention of children must be stopped during counter-terrorism responses, with the prohibition of the use of schools and hospitals for military purposes. Furthermore, the abduction of and violence directed against women and girls by Boko Haram, as well as the responses of security forces and vigilante groups in counter-terrorism operations, demand global attention.

Headquarters, together with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and UN-Women, must continue to advocate with the Governments and the Multinational Joint Task Force to advance a strategy to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse. That could be facilitated by recruiting dedicated gender advisers at all phases of the peace and development process.

The complex plight of people living in affected areas continues to impede the recovery in progress. In that regard, implementing the tripartite convention to strengthen judicial cooperation signed by Chad, Mali and the Niger would offer them better legal protection.

The trip to the Lake Chad basin region vividly demonstrated that we need to strengthen the role of the United Nations system, in close consultation with national authorities within the context of the United Nations development assistance framework so that the United Nations delivers as one. The coordinated activity of all United Nations agencies and programmes across the board will help deliver assistance in an effective, economically rational and transparent manner. Moreover, investments are essential to reducing poverty, providing education, health care and social services, and encouraging opportunities, which would considerably improve the socioeconomic situation.

We are convinced that long-term stability and sustainable peace can be achieved only through the nexus linking peace, security and development. Above all, the recent two visits by members of the Security Council and the Secretary-General to Africa, respectively, have amply demonstrated the need to promote a regional approach, which is the only way forward. Threats to the region, such as terrorism, environmental degradation and underdevelopment, cannot be successfully addressed in one country alone. They are interregional in nature and must be addressed accordingly.

Mr. Inchauste Jordán (Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, we thank Under-Secretary-General Jeffrey Feltman for the information he provided to us in connection with the first report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Lake Chad basin region (S/2017/764). We also thank Ms. Fatima Shehu Imam for the statement she delivered to the Council today.

Bolivia expresses its concern over the ongoing threat posed by Boko Haram to the Niger, Chad, Cameroon and Nigeria. The terrible attacks perpetrated by the group against the civilian population — murders, kidnappings, the use of girls as suicide bombers, sexual violence against women, the recruitment of children — all clearly show the urgent need for the international community to join forces in countering the extreme violence of Boko Haram. As a result, the region faces a devastating humanitarian situation. As indicated in the Secretary-General's report, 10.7 million people need humanitarian assistance. This is an alarming number that must force us to sit up and take note and compel us to undertake efforts that will allow the Governments of the Lake Chad basin to move forward.

In the short term, we are focusing on the fight against food insecurity and the basic needs of internally displaced persons, refugees and the most vulnerable people and, in cases of return, ensuring that their return be voluntary, safe and dignified. We echo the appeal made by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs for the necessary funds to be earmarked and for assistance to be provided to the people in need.

Recalling the message conveyed by the Deputy Secretary-General to the Council at our meeting of 10 August (see S/PV.8022), we must pay special attention and respond to the impact that this conflict has on women in the region. While sexual violence in conflict does not distinguish based on gender, it primarily affects affect women and girls. They are victims of violence, rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced marriages, forced sterilization and other forms of violence, in addition to stigmatization when they return to their communities. All of this is the result of Boko Haram's violent extremism.

In this regard, the empowerment of women in the fight against that terrorist group is crucial. The full and equal participation of women in conflict prevention, mediation and resolution processes must be ensured in the strategies that are being executed. It is therefore fundamental to ensure compliance with Security Council resolutions related to women and peace and security, especially resolutions 1325 (2000) and 2242 (2015).

We express our concern about the effects of climate change on the Lake Chad basin, such as water scarcity, desertification, drought, among others, all of which increase the instability of the region. We must develop strategies that address these risks as they largely affect socioeconomic development and food insecurity. In view of this terrible situation, we must acknowledge and commend the work of the Governments of the Lake Chad Basin Commission — Cameroon, Chad, the Niger and Nigeria — in the fight against terrorism. Thanks to the committed and coordinated work of these four countries, significant progress has been made in reducing Boko Haram's capacity.

In that respect, we welcome the Commission's initiative to hold the first regional conference in October, which will allow us to define mechanisms to tackle the region's crisis, in addition to dealing with the root causes of the conflict. We are confident that the leadership of these countries will allow us to establish a regional strategy that will address these root causes, as that is one of the main shortcomings that we are currently facing. In that connection, we should also consider developing a regional strategy to address disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation and reintegration of former members of Boko Haram.

The participation of regional organizations in these efforts is also essential. The African Union, the Economic Community of West African States, and the Economic Community of Central African States have assisted in the establishment of the Multinational Joint Task Force, which has considerably reduced the capacity of Boko Haram in recent years. In this regard, we call on donors and the international community to honour their pledges, to cooperate with countries in the region and to strengthen their governance and State institutions, as well as to contribute to the efforts of the subregion and the Multinational Joint Task Force in the fight against terrorism, as stated in resolution 2349 (2017). Boko Haram is not only a threat to the Lake Chad basin region, it is also a threat to the international community as a whole.

Mr. Kawamura (Japan): I thank Under-Secretary-General Feltman and Ms. Imam for their briefings.

Boko Haram represents an ongoing threat to the Lake Chad basin, with devastating near-term humanitarian impacts and long-term socioeconomic effects. We are encouraged by the efforts of the countries in the region, including gains made through the Multinational Joint Task Force during the reporting period. However, much more needs to be done to implement resolution 2349

(2017) and stabilize the region. Allow me to highlight a few areas that need particular attention.

More than anything else, there are massive and immediate humanitarian needs. The large-scale food insecurity and nutritional emergency requires not only more aid, but also delivery and access. There is a commendable effort under way to strengthen civil-military cooperation among humanitarian actors, the Multinational Joint Task Force and national security services. We encourage these actors to share information and best practices. We also call for full implementation of the tripartite agreement between the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Cameroon and Nigeria, which is essential for the safe and dignified return of refugees. Japan is actively considering additional humanitarian assistance to counter food insecurity and nutritional emergency.

In addition to the immediate humanitarian response to the crisis, long-term investment in socioeconomic development is required for early recovery. Following the Oslo Humanitarian Conference on Nigeria and the Lake Chad Region in February, the first senior officials meeting of the Oslo Consultative Group last week expanded the focus to long-term stability and development, including through enhanced institutions. Our efforts must build on this growing global attention to ensure that the United Nations technical expertise in development and peacebuilding is deployed coherently and effectively across the Lake Chad basin.

Both the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council have visited the field individually. These missions led to a shared awareness of the challenges facing the Lake Chad basin and of the need to do more. It has become clear that the deterioration of the economy raises the risk of terrorist recruitment. Local calls for job creation, education and vocational training for youth are common throughout the region. The long-term impact of climate change on the socioeconomic stability of the region and community also needs to be examined. The importance of enhancing community resilience to violent extremism by addressing the root causes of the Boko Haram insurgency cannot be overemphasized.

I would also like to draw attention to the disproportionate impact of sexual and gender-based violence on women and girls in the region by Boko Haram, as well as other actors. Female internally displaced persons are also most vulnerable during a humanitarian crisis and a gender-responsive approach is a must.

All actors must integrate gender analysis into their substantive work, including by adopting a gender-specific approach for the protection and empowerment of women and girls victimized by or formerly associated with Boko Haram. As a recent example of efforts to implement resolution 2349 (2017), Japan has funded a subregional workshop, hosted by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, in Yaoundé in July, to better integrate a gender perspective into criminal justice responses to terrorism. This workshop supported multisectoral efforts by four countries, as well as the African Union (AU) to strengthen the criminal justice response while ensuring that women's rights are respected.

In a similar vein, we commend the recent United Nations-AU joint mission to Nigeria under the Deputy Secretary-General to support efforts to advance peace through women's well-being and empowerment. Empowering women and promoting their active role is essential to rebuilding society and strengthening community resilience against terrorism and violent extremism.

Japan strongly supports the United Nations regional approaches to the Lake Chad basin and the Sahel. We also encourage UNOWAS and UNOCA to focus sustained attention on and follow up to resolution 2349 (2017) in that regard. Japan looks forward to working together with international and regional partners to secure a better future for the region.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Mr. Feltman, for his comprehensive briefing on the situation in the Lake Chad Basin region.

Terrorism remains the main threat facing the entire world, and the African continent in particular. The increased activity of militants of the terrorist group Boko Haram in north-eastern Nigeria and north-western Cameroon is of great concern. Attacks on civilians, refugee camps and humanitarian convoys have become more frequent. Terrorists are not afraid to use women and children as suicide bombers. By some estimates, over the past six months there have been several hundred victims.

We strongly condemn the criminal ideology and practices of Boko Haram. We should abandon the harmful classification of the fight against Boko Haram as a conflict. That organization is classified as a terrorist entity by the Security Council. The fight against it is therefore a counter-terrorist operation. Attempts to represent terrorists as one of the parties to a conflict only serves to create the illusion that punishment for their crimes can be avoided.

We are convinced of the importance of coordinated action by Africans, including its subregional organizations, in the fight against terrorism. We note the relevant efforts of the Lake Chad Basin Commission and the Multinational Joint Task Force, formed by Cameroon, the Niger, Nigeria, Chad and Benin. We welcome the results achieved to date.

Fundamental advances in counter-terrorism activities are hampered by the close link between terrorists and various criminal groups, pirates and smugglers. Bandits exploit gaps in national and cross-border security to engage in their illicit activity. As a result, the region is witnessing a flourishing trade in drugs and arms and uncontrolled and illegal migration. One cannot but be alarmed by the fact that in profiting from the chaos and suffering of the population, criminal elements provide material support to terrorists.

Despite the priority of the counter-terrorism element, the situation in the region cannot be rectified by force alone. To achieve sustainable political stabilization, it is necessary to work to address the root causes that have led to the deterioration of the situation and the creation of Boko Haram. Terrorists and extremists of every kind must be deprived of fuel to grow. It is important to resolve acute social and economic problems and to strengthen the institutions of State authority in that part of the African continent.

As noted in the Secretary-General's report on the situation in the Lake Chad basin (S/2017/764), the humanitarian situation continues to deteriorate. Resources that national Governments could allocate to alleviating the suffering of the population are being redirected to fight Boko Haram. A vicious cycle has therefore been created; people cannot be fed until terrorism is defeated, but terrorism cannot be defeated so long as extremist groups thrive on a despairing and desolate population.

In that regard, we support a decisive and adequate response on the part of the international community to the threats and challenges faced by the countries of the Lake Chad basin. It is important to ensure the coherence of approaches to assisting countries of the region. At the same time, outside support should not be turned into the imposition of ready-made formulas that are alien to African states. The international role must be supported by the coordinating role of the United Nations, in close coordination with African structures and individual African States.

We welcome the Secretary-General's intention to develop a comprehensive strategy for the region. We believe that it should serve as a consolidating and cementing element for external support for the region. In our view, it is important to take into account the experience garnered from the implementation of the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel, the real impact of which has yet to be seen.

For our part, we stand ready to continue to support African States in addressing the problems facing them in the context of the fight against Boko Haram and in helping refugees and the victims of natural disasters. We will continue to provide humanitarian and other assistance, both bilaterally and through international organizations.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Ethiopia.

At the outset, I wish to thank Under-Secretary-General Feltman for his comprehensive briefing on the security, humanitarian, human rights and social and economic situations in the Lake Chad basin. We also thank Ms. Fatima Imam for joining us via teleconference from Maiduguri, Nigeria.

We welcome the first six-month report of the Secretary-General on the Lake Chad basin (S/2017/764), pursuant to resolution 2349 (2017). In that regard, we take note of the progress that countries of the region have made in the fight against Boko Haram, and we commend the crucial role played by the Multinational Joint Task Force. However, it is only by addressing the root causes of the conflict in the subregion, including challenges resulting from climate change, under-development and unemployment, among other things, that long-term solutions to the crises in the region can be found.

That was indeed strongly underscored during the discussion we had with the African Union Peace and Security Council in Addis Ababa on the situation of

the Lake Chad basin. We welcome the plan by the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) and the African Union to organize the first regional conference in N'Djamena next month, with a view to developing a regional strategy. The regional dimension of the security threats in the subregion and their cross-cutting nature no doubt require an integrated approach, and the initiative of the LCBC and the African Union is a step in the right direction.

In spite of the progress seen in scaling up international support, the increasing humanitarian needs in the Lake Chad basin require continued mobilization and support. The plight of refugees and internally displaced persons is a matter of particular concern. We hope that the United Nations and the international community will redouble efforts in that regard.

I will conclude by underlining the importance of further coordination of the efforts of the United Nations and the African Union, as well as their respective regional mechanisms, to meet the needs of the countries of the Lake Chad basin. Developing a regional strategy to address the root causes of the crises, encouraging international support for the Multinational Joint Task Force and urging donors to fulfil pledges for humanitarian needs are some of the priorities before the Council. We hope to see progress along those lines over the coming six months.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I now give the floor to the representative of Nigeria.

Mr. Haidara (Nigeria): I wish to thank the Ethiopian presidency and the membership of the Security Council for organizing this briefing. It is illustrative of the positive disposition of members of the Security Council towards resolving the myriad challenges of the Lake Chad Basin region. Our special appreciation goes to the Secretary-General for his report (S/2017/764), which contains far-reaching recommendations. We also commend Under-Secretary-General Feltman for his insight on the situation in the region and we note the perspectives shared by Fatima Shehu Imam.

The Boko Haram insurgency has negatively impacted virtually every facet of human endeavour, including the economy, the polity, and the lives and livelihoods of people not only in the north-east of Nigeria, but across the region.

The insurgency has been met with resolve and resilience of the Nigerian people and Government. The Multinational Joint Task Force has had great success in weakening Boko Haram. We have continued to witness the emergence of rescued survivors and victims, hitherto under the brutal oppression of Boko Haram in the north-east. Communities have pulled together to provide succour.

For its part, the Nigerian Government has made significant progress in the fight against Boko Haram. The Nigerian military has successfully taken over the Sambisa forest and its environs. In that success story, we acknowledge the critical support of our neighbouring countries, namely, Cameroon, Chad, the Niger and Benin. That progress notwithstanding, the Nigerian Government is aware of other development challenges in the region, including the shrinking of Lake Chad. Averting that consequence will require dedicated international intervention to recharge the lake.

As we celebrate our gains in the war against Boko Haram, we are not oblivious of the humanitarian challenges resulting from the massive displacement of persons, the abandoned farmlands and the disruption of the educational system, among others. In that regard, the Government of Nigeria has embarked on programmes to support the reintegration of victims into their communities.

I am glad to report that the Presidential Committee on the North-East Initiative has been mandated to coordinate and provide synergy, leadership and direction for the various initiatives to help bring normalcy to the region. That encompasses Government, development partners, private foundations and civil society. We are also accelerating the implementation of existing legal and institutional frameworks to alleviate the suffering of our people, in the spirit of the Istanbul World Humanitarian Summit of May 2016.

We acknowledge and welcome the critical support provided by the United Nations agencies to the girls released by Boko Haram. For its part, the Nigerian Government has continued to provide food, integrated healthcare, shelter, psychosocial support and access to water and sanitation amenities for those in need. We are also engaging highly respected community and religious leaders to discourage vulnerable youth from being radicalized. We continue to accord the highest premium to increasing the resilience of internally

displaced persons through vocational training and skills acquisition programmes.

We hope that at this critical juncture, when there is an improvement in the security situation as a result of the recent military gains, the Security Council and the international community will continue to engage the Governments in the region in the search for lasting peace, security, protection of civilians and resolution of the humanitarian situation caused by the activities of Boko Haram.

May I seize this opportunity to reiterate the commitment of Nigeria to the protection of civilians in armed conflict, in recognition of the primary responsibility of States to protect civilians within their national jurisdiction. This conviction underlines our Government's resolve to take all measures necessary to protect civilians in the battle against the terrorist group Boko Haram and its ilk. All such measures are being taken within a framework designed to simultaneously address the short- and medium-term development needs of the region.

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate that the future of the people of the Lake Chad basin region rests on durable security and the sustainability of resources around the lake. We are confident that by enhancing collaboration and consolidating strong partnerships through the Lake Chad Basin Commission and the African Union, we will swiftly overcome the challenge. The upcoming N'Djamena meeting is a consolidation of such efforts.

We renew the call for rededicated international action, increased global attention and active engagement with countries of the Lake Chad basin region to accelerate the recovery efforts and to address the root causes of terrorism.

The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.8048

Security Council

Seventy-second year

Provisional

8048th meeting
Thursday, 14 September 2017, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Alemu	(Ethiopia)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Llorentty Soliz
	China	Mr. Zhang Dianbin
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	France	Mr. Michon
	Italy	Mr. Cardi
	Japan	Mr. Kawamura
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Umarov
	Russian Federation	Mr. Safronkov
	Senegal	Mr. Seck
	Sweden	Mr. Skoog
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Ms. Sison
	Uruguay	Mr. Rosselli

Agenda

The situation in Libya

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (S/2017/726)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

17-28636 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Libya

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (S/2017/726)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Libya to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2017/775, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

I wish to draw the attention of the members of the Council to document S/2017/726, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bolivia (Plurinational State of), China, Egypt, Ethiopia, France, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, Senegal, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Uruguay

The President: The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2376 (2017).

I now give the floor to the representative of Libya.

Mr. Elmajerbi (Libya) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, Sir, allow me to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of September.

I also wish to welcome the adoption of resolution 2376 (2017), on extending for another year the mandate of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL). I should like to make several comments in that regard.

First, we must base our work on the principle of national ownership — a crucial principle referred to in a number of the Council's previous resolutions. Against that backdrop, the United Nations Support Mission in Libya is a special political mission with a mandate to facilitate the political process in Libya and to bring together the various parties in the country. We are aware of the fact that the political and institutional divisions are the key reason for the various challenges faced today by the Libyan State. We need a separation of powers into the legislative, executive and judicial branches. And we need a single, unified army that operates under civilian authority.

Secondly, the issue of illegal migration is also a major challenge for my country. This issue is of course linked to the political and institutional divisions that prevail in the country and the volatile security situation. We know that migrants are living in incredibly difficult conditions. That, too, is linked to the lack of stability in my country. We understand the concerns expressed by host States. However, the political crisis is the crisis that needs to be resolved. That is the key to allowing us to overcome all of the other challenges facing my country. We also emphasize the fact that illegal migration is an international issue, and therefore we need to find an international solution to that multidimensional problem. In addition, we will need to tackle the root causes of the crisis — not simply its symptoms. Transit countries such as Libya cannot manage the problem alone. Moreover, we need to work in coordination with States of origin. And we need to tackle the criminal organizations that help migrants transit through Libya.

The overarching aim of UNSMIL is political stability. We must therefore put in place a comprehensive development plan and work towards rebuilding my country. We also need to create job opportunities, including providing opportunities for workers from neighbouring countries. All of that needs to be undertaken within a legal framework that makes it possible for migrant workers in my country to operate in an environment that allows them fully to enjoy their rights.

We held various discussions with a number of members of the Council in order to incorporate into today's resolution language pertaining to national

ownership and coordination with the Government of National Accord. Unfortunately, our suggestions were not included in the resolution, and the concept of national ownership was not referred to as we asked that it be. That was an entirely legitimate demand.

The meeting rose at 10.20 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.8049

Security Council

Seventy-second year

Provisional

8049th meeting

Thursday, 14 September 2017, 10.20 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Alemu	(Ethiopia)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Llorentty Soliz
	China	Mr. Zhang Dianbin
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	France	Mr. Michon
	Italy	Mr. Cardi
	Japan	Mr. Kawamura
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Umarov
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Senegal	Mr. Seck
	Sweden	Mr. Skoog
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Ms. Sison
	Uruguay	Mr. Rosselli

Agenda

Identical letters dated 19 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council (S/2016/53)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia (S/2017/745)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

17-28648 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Identical letters dated 19 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council (S/2016/53)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia (S/2017/745)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Colombia to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2017/776, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by all the members of the Security Council. I would like to thank them for co-sponsoring the draft resolution.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2017/745, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Colombia.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bolivia (Plurinational State of), China, Egypt, Ethiopia, France, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, Senegal, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Uruguay

The President: The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2377 (2017).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Rycroft (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom warmly welcomes the unanimous adoption of resolution 2377 (2017). In finalizing the mandate of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, we have taken an important step in supporting the parties to consolidate the gains achieved over the past year as they implement the next phase of the peace process.

It seems that each time that we meet in the Chamber on Colombia, there is another historical milestone to welcome. In July (see S/PV.7997), we welcomed the laying down of arms by the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC), and earlier this month (see S/PV.8041), we saw the FARC transform into a political party — the new Fuerza Alternativa Revolucionaria del Común — at its inaugural Congress in Bogotá. As President Santos Calderón told us when we visited in May, the implementation of the Final Peace Agreement is irreversible.

But irreversible and sustainable are not exactly the same. We have officially reached the hard bit now. While a laydown of arms more than half a century in the making is without question history, it happens in a moment. The reincorporation of the FARC into society will not happen instantly. It will be a process. It will require commitment. It will require sacrifice. It will mean putting aside differences that were born long before most Colombians.

Sustainable peace will depend on the FARC's successful reincorporation into civilian life, so I am pleased that the United Nations will continue to be able to play a supportive role in accompanying the parties in the next crucial phase of implementation. I want to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Jean Arnault, and his team for their dedication and hard work over the past few weeks to put in place in all necessary preparations to enable the Verification Mission to start work on 26 September — the day after the first Mission finishes its mandate. I want to reiterate our thanks to Jean Arnault and the first United Nations Mission for a truly excellent job in supporting the FARC's laydown of arms.

The Pope's visit to Colombia last week further reinforced Colombia's remarkable achievements over the past 18 months, and we welcome the most recent positive development, on 4 September, when the Government and the National Liberation Army signed a bilateral ceasefire. It is also very encouraging that the parties have indicated that they would like the United

Nations to play a role in verifying that ceasefire. It is a resounding endorsement of the United Nations work with the FARC peace process over the past year. We stand ready to support it in whatever way we can and look forward to further advice from the Secretary-General in due course.

With our action today, we have shown that the Council remains fully committed to assisting Colombia on its journey towards peace. We have put a verification team in place, based on the Secretary-General's recommendations following close consultations with the parties. It is now up to Colombia — both its Government and its people — to show that all of the history that has been made up to this point will mean a lasting peace for generations to come.

Ms. Sison (United States of America): The United States, too, warmly welcomes the continued support of the Security Council to Colombia. The Government of Colombia has made critical progress in implementing the Final Peace Agreement with the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC). As a result of the parties' commitment and the support of the United Nations, the FARC has peacefully laid down its arms. The last containers with all of those weapons are now in the hands of the United Nations, and the Government has already begun the process of reintegrating the former combatants into society.

Colombia has shown the world that commitment to a political process and a shared future, along with strong, unified support from the Council and the international community, can bring success in peacebuilding. Colombia is an example for the region and for the world. But now Colombia faces the challenge of consolidating that peace. The threat to that peace is serious, and it comes in the form of a lack of infrastructure, basic services and the rule of law in conflict-affected areas formerly occupied by the FARC, creating a haven for criminal activities, drugs and violence. Yet we remain focused on building on the gains made and creating the conditions for peace to prosper. In particular, resolution 2377 (2017), adopted today, advances the readiness of the second political mission in helping to address these challenges. We stand ready to partner with Colombia and support the Security Council in the hard work ahead.

Additionally, we welcome the announcement by the Government of Colombia and the National Liberation Army of a temporary bilateral ceasefire. The United States joins other members of the Council in expressing our interest in considering how the temporary bilateral ceasefire could be supported by the work of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia. We look forward to hearing the Secretary-General's recommendations on the way forward in the coming days.

With our vote today, the United States underscores that we stand with Colombia as a steadfast partner and as a friend. The United States has stood with Colombia through times of great challenge, and we continue to stand with it in this moment of hope and opportunity.

Mr. Rosselli (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): The adoption of a resolution by the Security Council is in no way extraordinary. What is extraordinary today is the peace process that the Colombian people are pursuing. This is a real example to the world of commitment to peace undertaken by leaders who once were in conflict with one another, and which has culminated in the full integration into the political system of Colombia of the former Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia. That is an absolutely extraordinary development in the history of peacemaking.

My colleagues have also just underscored the fact that the most difficult stages lie ahead. What is equally extraordinary is the support that the Security Council is providing to the Colombian people. The United Nations is committed to and standing shoulder to shoulder with Colombia in this peacemaking process. We are full of hope following the recent announcement of the ceasefire recently signed by the Government of Colombia with the National Liberation Army, which suggests that we will soon be seeing the extinction of the few flames that continue to smolder.

We extend our congratulations to the Secretary-General, his Special Representative and the entire United Nations team in Colombia for the admirable work they are undertaking. Of course, we warmly congratulate the dear people of Colombia.

Mr. Iliichev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian delegation supported the adoption of resolution 2377 (2017), endorsing the size and mandate of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, which will begin its work on 26 September. We consider it important that the mandate of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia was elaborated in close consultation with the Colombian parties.

The successful course of the peace process in Colombia allows us to draw two lessons, the first of which is the importance of the principle of national ownership. It is only as a result of the will of the Colombian sides that the peace agreements were able to be reached and implemented. Secondly, the example of Colombia proves that primarily political solutions are the only guarantee for an effective and lasting settlement. The role of the United Nations and the Verification Mission is to help the parties in preserve the peace process and moving it forward, which has already enabled us to take to the first steps on the path towards the socioeconomic and political reintegration of former combatants, including the formation of a political party. We hope that the parties will continue to address outstanding issues in good faith and that the Verification Mission will provide the requisite support.

It is important not to weaken the close attention we have paid to the security situation to ensure that no vacuums emerge. We therefore deem important the progress in the peace process achieved between the Government of Colombia and the National Liberation Army on a temporary ceasefire. This became possible in part through the help of guarantor States: Brazil, Venezuela, Cuba, Norway, Chile and Ecuador. We hope that it will bring about a lasting settlement of the long-standing internal conflict and contribute to the establishment of peace.

We await the Secretariat's imminent recommendations on how the Verification Mission should respond to the request by the Government and the National Liberation Army's for assistance in monitoring the implementation of their agreement. We again reaffirm our readiness to continue to assist the people and Government of Colombia in their endeavour to forge robust peace and post-conflict development.

Mr. Kawamura (Japan): We welcome the unanimous adoption of resolution 2377 (2017). Japan is pleased to have co-sponsored it.

The first United Nations Mission in Colombia has been a model of success. We commend the Mission for its efficient responsible work, including in the process of the laying down of arms. This success was built on the strong commitment to the Peace Agreement by both the Government and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia.

The United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia will also rely on the continued commitment and determination of all parties, including on economic and social integration, security guarantees and the full observance of the peace agreement. The whole-of-United Nations approach will remain critical.

Japan reiterates its support for the parties to implement the peace agreement and will closely follow the work of the second Mission.

Mr. Llorentty Solíz (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Bolivia commends the unanimous adoption of resolution 2376 (2017), endorsing the recommendations of the Secretary-General for the establishment of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia. The fact that it has been not only unanimously adopted, but also sponsored by all 15 members of the Council is an indication of how much we support this process.

We have seen extraordinary progress in the peace process in Colombia. The consolidation of the ceasefire, the laying down of arms by the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC), the establishment of a new party and the incorporation of the FARC into the political life in Colombia are key indications that progress is being made.

Bolivia wishes to thank and pay tribute to the United Nations Mission in Colombia, both to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and his entire team, who in this short period of time, has efficiently supported, through the tripartite Monitoring and Verification Mechanism, all the progress made in the peace process. We particularly commend the men and women who have acted as observers as part of the Mechanism, which was deployed last year. They have done an impeccable job.

We cannot forget that the real protagonists of this process are the leadership of the Government — President Santos — and the leadership of the FARC in their commitment to the victims of decades of war and clashes and, in essence, to the Colombian people. We also cannot forget that there is still a great deal of work to be done. We must focus on the main areas of the peace agreement, in particular those that refer to transforming the living conditions of the most vulnerable members of society and closing the gaps between urban and rural areas. We hail the progress made in the area of the granting of land deeds.

As we know, the United Nations Verfication Mission in Colombia, the second Mission in the country,

will be responsible for verifying the political, economic and social reincorporation of more than 10,000 former FARC combatants and implementing protection and security measures to protect them, pursuant to the points already indicated in the previous meeting on the final agreement. This is perhaps one of the most complex parts of this process. Bolivia believes that achieving lasting and sustainable peace in Colombia will depend on the successful reintegration of former FARC combatants into civilian life. It is highly likely that in this phase of the peace process the relevant bodies will turn away from the peace process and the progress being made will not be made a priority by the relevant organs. That is why, in these circumstances, the Security Council in particular and the international community in general must lend more decisive support to Colombian progress.

Bolivia also wishes to commend the agreement reached between the Government of Colombia and the National Liberation Army to implement a bilateral and temporary ceasefire, which was recently announced by a round of talks held in Quito. We are ready to support this process in the way that we are requested to do so.

Mr. Seck (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): The delegation of Senegal commends the unanimous adoption by the Security Council of resolution 2377 (2017), approving the Secretary-General's recommendations with regard to the size, operational modalities and the mandate of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia. The new Mission, created pursuant to resolution 2366 (2017), testifies to the considerable progress achieved by the Colombian Government and the Fuerza Alternativa Revolucionaria del Común as part of the process of laying down arms. This new promising phase will enable the parties to take the necessary steps for a political, economic and social resolution of the crisis.

Senegal welcomes the political will demonstrated, which has allowed all these results to be realized and encourages the parties to continue along this promising path. The announcement of the signing of a ceasefire agreement between the Government of Colombia and the National Liberation Army is something which is part and parcel of this movement. Colombia can count on Senegal's support for achieving a lasting and sustainable peace. The Colombian experience is an excellent source of inspiration for the whole world and for Africa in particular. Seen from Africa, what is happening in Colombia follows saying I heard on Colombian television: a people who does not know their history is condemned to see it repeated. Colombia knows its history.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Colombia.

Ms. Mejía Vélez (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, and the members of the Council for convening this meeting.

The Council's unanimous co-sponsorhip and adoption of resolution 2377 (2017), containing the Secretary-General's recommendations, is a new demonstration of support to Colombia and will be important in achieving peace in our country. We would also like to thank the United Kingdom, the penholder of the resolution, for its continued support, and, of course, the Secretary-General and the team of Mr. Jean Arnault, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for their support and unswerving commitment to peace and reconciliation in Colombia.

We realize that the challenge is enormous, but in the past months the Council has witnessed the actions that have been taken, step by step, despite the obstacles and difficulties, by the parties to accomplish the ceasefire, the demobilization of the combatants of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia and their definitive laying down of arms and, currently, the neutralization of weapons, a vital process that reaffirms their political will. As Council members are aware, this is a crucial though very difficult time, which demands all of our political will and the Council's support. We have been greatly helped by the participation of the international community and the observers from the countries of the region and elsewhere. We can all agree that their support has been effective.

I cannot conclude without expressing my thanks for the demonstration of support we have seen to the bilateral and temporary ceasefire recently announced between the Government and the National Liberation Army, which will come into force on 1 October for an initial period of 102 days. The people of Colombia firmly believe that these new developments will open up infinite possibilities for a nation where reconciliation and the rebuilding of a collective peace will eventually strengthen our democracy that will help the entire region and, needless to say, improve the living conditions not just of Colombians in urban centres but also of those in rural areas. I thank the Council once again.

The meeting rose at 10.40 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.8050

Security Council

Seventy-second year

Provisional

8050th meeting
Thursday, 14 September 2017, 10.50 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Alemu	(Ethiopia)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Llorentty Soliz
	China	Mr. Zhang Dianbin
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	France	Mr. Michon
	Italy	Mr. Lambertini
	Japan	Mr. Kawamura
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Umarov
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Senegal	Mr. Seck
	Sweden	Mr. Skoog
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Ms. Sison
	Uruguay	Mr. Bermúdez

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2017/746)

Letter dated 30 August 2017 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/201/747)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

17-28642 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2017/746)

Letter dated 30 August 2017 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/201/747)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Sudan to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Jeremiah Mamabolo, Joint Special Representative for the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2017/746, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, and document S/2017/747, which contains a letter dated 30 August 2017 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council.

I now give the floor to Mr. Mamabolo.

Mr. Mamabolo: I am grateful for the opportunity to brief the Council once again on the situation in Darfur.

Per resolution 2363 (2017), the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) has proceeded with its reconfiguration while continuing to implement its strategic priorities on the protection of civilians, mediation between the Government of the Sudan and armed movements, and support for the mediation of intercommunal conflicts.

UNAMID has started phase one of the reconfiguration, namely, the closure of 11 team sites and a reduction of military personnel strength from 15,845 to 11,395 and police personnel strength from 3,403 to 2,888. Since June, UNAMID has closed four team sites in North and East Darfur, and the remaining seven will be closed by the end of September. The Mission has developed plans to deploy the Jebel Marra Task Force and requested the Government for land to establish a temporary operating base in Golo. The protection strategy for Jebel Marra is also being developed to ensure coordination with humanitarian partners and tailor military and police activities to the area. The review of the civilian personnel, commensurate with the new troop ceiling and configuration, has been completed and will be reflected in the submission of the revised UNAMID 2017/18 budget.

Regarding the situation in Darfur, after the brief clashes in East and North Darfur in May and June between the Government of the Sudan Armed Forces and the Sudan Liberation Army/Minni Minawi (SLA/MM), supported by the Sudan Liberation Army/Transitional Council and the Justice and Equality Movement, Darfur largely remained calm. The clashes are a reminder of the need for a commitment by all parties to cease hostilities and to take major strides towards a permanent and lasting peace.

With the exception of the violent clashes between the Rezeigat and the Ma'alia in East Darfur, which resulted in significant casualties, there has been a reduction in the number of intercommunal incidents, owing partly to the intervention of the native administration, community leaders and local committees supported by the Government, the United Nations country team and UNAMID. Violence against civilians, banditry and criminal activities continued, albeit on a smaller scale, with the majority of the cases occurring against internally displaced persons (IDPs), farmers and women. On the human rights situation, there has been some progress. The President pardoned six human rights defenders on 29 August. Efforts are being made at the local level to extend judicial services beyond urban centres, and the perpetrators of criminal incidents, in some instances, have been apprehended. However, much still needs to be done to improve the overall human rights situation.

Most of the insecurity currently experienced in Darfur can be attributed to the tensions originating from the underlying causes of the conflict, exacerbated by the proliferation of arms in the hands of civilians and militia groups. Intercommunal disputes, usually triggered by competition over land, water, livestock and mineral resources, have become increasingly violent

owing to the availability of weapons. On 6 August, the Government of the Sudan launched the third phase of the arms-control campaign, reiterating that only members of the regular forces were to be allowed to carry, acquire or stockpile weapons or ammunition.

Subsequently, the Second Vice-President conducted a sensitization tour of Darfur followed by initiatives in the various states led by the Walis. Reactions to the arms-collection campaign in Darfur vary, with the opposition and non-signatory movements, some tribes and militia groups critical of Government intentions, with others such as the Arab militia leader Musa Hilal opposed outright to the process.

Meanwhile, progress in the implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur remains limited, particularly on those outstanding issues that are fundamental to sustainable peace in Darfur, such as durable solutions to displacement, the administration of land, water and other scarce resources, and the issue of armed militias. UNAMID continues to engage the remaining Commissions and Fund of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur, but their lack of capacity and presence in Darfur continues to pose a challenge.

Efforts by the African Union High-level Implementation Panel, with the support of UNAMID, for a cessation-of-hostilities agreement and the resumption of direct negotiations towards an inclusive peace agreement to end the conflict, have remained inconclusive. Further to my engagement in Paris with Abdul Wahid, Minni Minawi and Gibril Ibrahim, I have sent a report to the parties detailing the current status of the mediation process, especially the stalemate in the negotiations on cessation of hostilities.

The movements insist on a sequencing of the negotiations from the cessation of hostilities to discussions on the controversial issue of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur. The Government, on the other hand, insists on a commitment to the Document as a basis for negotiations and Doha as the venue for the talks. Abdul Wahid maintains his refusal to join the peace process. While we will continue to engage both parties to break this stalemate, we call upon the Council and those with influence on the parties to stress the importance of a political settlement and desist from bringing more suffering to the very people that they profess to represent.

Displacements were reported following the clashes between the Government of the Sudan and the SLA/MM in North Darfur in May and June, although the figures could not be confirmed. IDPs continue to require protection and humanitarian assistance on a daily basis. There is an urgent need for the Government of the Sudan, with the support of the international community, to find sustainable solutions that would enable the IDPs to return to their homes voluntarily.

Cooperation with the Government of the Sudan has noticeably improved. The humanitarian operating environment continued to improve, with partners reporting faster approval for movements within Darfur and fewer denials of access. UNAMID also continues to experience decreased movement restrictions. UNAMID remains committed to working with the Government authorities to overcome the remaining access challenges.

The issuance of visas and the clearance of essential equipment continue to improve. However, the Mission is still awaiting the issuance of visas for human rights staff. The shipments currently being held represent a fifth of the number held this time last year.

The cooperation of the Government for the reconfiguration of UNAMID, particularly for the establishment of a temporary operating base in Golo, is a matter of priority.

In conclusion, I would like to express UNAMID's appreciation to the Council for the support that we continue to receive.

The President: I thank Mr. Mamabolo for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those Council members who wish to make statements.

Mr. Bermúdez (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, allow me to thank the Mr. Jeremiah Mamabolo, Joint Special Representative for the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), for his presentation of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2017/746).

Uruguay underlines the report's indication that, despite the decrease in armed clashes between the Government of the Sudan and rebel forces, the security and human rights situation in Darfur remains unstable. It should also be noted that one of the main hotspots of violence in Darfur continues to involve intercommunal conflicts, which are closely related to the root causes of the conflict and are exacerbated by armed militias, as well as by the fact that weapons are proliferating among

for civilian population and that rule-of-law institutions continue to lack the capacity and effective means to meet those challenges.

My delegation considers it vital that the Government of the Sudan and the armed movements comply with their several declarations concerning the cessation of hostilities and move on to the next stages of the peace process facilitated by the African Union High-level Implementation Panel, with the support of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for South Sudan and the Sudan and the Joint Special Representative for the African Union–United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur. Progress in those areas would allow for the creation of the necessary conditions for effectively addressing the root causes of the conflict, such as intercommunal conflicts, and, moreover, contribute to the safe return to their homes of the more than 2 million internally displaced persons in Darfur.

As noted in the report of the Secretary-General, UNAMID is moving forward in its reconfiguration in accordance with the Security Council's adoption of resolution 2363 (2017). As we have repeatedly said, the Government of the Sudan's cooperation with the Council and UNAMID is indispensable for successfully achieving that transition. We note that the general environment in which UNAMID is operating has shown signs of improvement, while, at the same time, increases in the number of criminal incidents and in the restrictions have also been noted.

Nevertheless, the Mission continues to face several logistical difficulties that continue to hamper its work, including delays in issuing visas, especially for human rights workers in the Area. In that regard, we urge the Government of the Sudan to expedite the process of resolving outstanding operational restrictions, while living up to all its obligations in that respect and sustaining the positive spirit that characterized the review process of UNAMID. Furthermore, although the Mission is drawing down, we are aware of the important and continuing necessary role that it plays in the area of the protection of civilians, including, for example, monitoring human rights violations, carrying out daily patrols and supporting intercommunal conflict mediation.

To conclude, allow me to express Uruguay's gratitude to all UNAMID personnel, the United Nations country team and humanitarian workers, who continue to work tirelessly and often in difficult conditions so as to achieve sustainable peace in Darfur.

Mr. Llorentty Solíz (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation thanks Joint Special Representative Mamabolo for his briefing to us on the situation in Darfur and on the status of the implementation of Doha Document for Peace in Darfur.

As we have stated over the past several months, we would like to highlight again the fact that clashes between the Sudanese Government and rebel groups have been considerably reduced in comparison to previous years. Although intercommunal conflicts were noted, resolving them is nevertheless linked to the root causes of the conflict. Strict compliance with their unilateral declarations on the cessation of hostilities by the Government and armed groups allows for progress to be made in the peace process, which the African Union High-level Implementation Panel, the Joint Special Representative and the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for South Sudan and the Sudan are facilitating so diligently.

The relative calm afforded by the cessation of hostilities must lead to bolstering the political processes aimed at achieving peace in Darfur. The national dialogue has allowed for advances in governance reform with the participation of various political parties. It is important that those new structures, which have resulted from the national dialogue, be able to focus on the implementation of the Doha Document. However, it is critical to resolve differences with regard to the Document. Implementing the provisions of the Doha Document would allow for addressing root issues, such as the adoption of land-related laws. Moreover, it also provides for a permanent ceasefire involving the armed movements and the disarmament of the civilian population and militia, among other components, that constitute fundamental requirements for establishing stable and lasting peace in Darfur. We therefore call on the movements that are not signatories to the Doha Document to resume talks and move forward in the political process, which represents the only way out of the conflict in the Sudan.

Concerning progress in implementing the recommendations set out in resolution 2363 (2017), which we adopted several months ago, we believe that it is crucial to work towards ensuring State presence and strengthening the institutions and the police in the territories from which the African Union-United

Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) will draw down. To carry out the reintegration processes and ensure the security of the civilian population, there must be constant and fluid coordination between the Government, the United Nations country team and UNAMID.

We also welcome Government measures to strengthen judicial institutions — a key measure for achieving success in the reconciliation processes and the fight against impunity. In the same vein, we believe that the Government's campaign to collect illegal weapons and unlicensed vehicles in the Darfur region is a positive step, which, despite the complications it is experiencing, is noteworthy. Those governmental measures, which are in line with the process of peacebuilding and being carried out by the United Nations, require the support of the international community.

In addition to the challenges I mentioned here, the humanitarian situation of internally displaced persons continues to concern us. Although there were no major displacements this year, millions of internally displaced persons remain exposed to various forms of violence, among whom women and children are the main victims. Let us hope that progress will be made in the plan for the voluntary resettlement of internally displaced persons. Moreover, the effects of inclement weather, such as the flash floods in the Kalma camp, and the spread of disease have claimed several lives since June. We trust that the Government, as it has demonstrated before, will ensure the necessary support for enabling UNAMID to comply freely with its mandate and for granting access to humanitarian workers so that they can carry out the tasks of caring for those affected.

In conclusion, we recognize that there are many challenges in this new phase of UNAMID, and we would like to commend the work that has been carried out in the Sudan over the past 10 years. Their work and dedication in search of peace is one of the most noble and difficult tasks in the world. We express our gratitude to them.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Sudan.

Mr. Mohamed (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): First of all, allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I wish you every success. I also would like to thank the Permanent Representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt, who successfully guided the work of the Council during the month of August. Finally, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2017/746) and, of course, Mr. Mamabolo, Joint Special Representative for the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, both for his briefing and his sincere cooperation.

I welcome the outcome of the twenty-first consultative meeting between the African Union and the United Nations, which took place last week in your country, Mr. President. The meeting reaffirmed the central aspect of the strategic partnership between the African Union and the United Nations and called for a strengthening of the partnership in order to achieve peace and stability throughout our country, Africa. The partnership between the two organizations through the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) is an outstanding example of the vitality we wish to see. We hope to see a strengthened partnership, especially with regard to African capabilities and capacities, early warning mechanisms, conflict prevention and resolution, rebuilding and the necessary financing for peacekeeping missions in Africa.

In recent months, the five states of Darfur have seen the mobilization of all segments of society and all institutions to lay the foundations of peace and stability, thanks to the efforts of the Sudanese Government and the United Nations — particularly UNAMID and the African Union. That has enabled the consolidation of security and stability throughout the entire region after the rebel movements were neutralized and forced to withdraw from Darfur and the Sudan, so that all can finally focus on implementing development projects and strengthening intercommunal reconciliation to set Darfur back on a positive path to contribute to building a modern Sudan — as it was once doing.

As the Council may recall, the President of the Sudan, Mr. Omar Hassan Ahmad Al-Bashir, expressed the intention of the Government to implement the campaign to collect illegal arms from all Sudanese citizens. The campaign was launched under the supervision of the Vice-President of the Republic, Mr. Hasabo Mohammed Abdul Rahman, following the adoption of a staggered national plan that starts with awareness raising about the need to surrender weapons and then with the implementation of one of the oldest laws in the Sudan, on weapons and ammunitions, for those who continue to violate it. Preliminary reports indicate that the plan is thus far progressing well,

but the collection, marking, seizure and elimination of weapons is a very costly operation that requires significant technical capabilities. That is why we called upon the international community to lend its assistance to ensure that this crucially important plan to sustain peace and security is implemented. As the Council is aware, the proliferation of weaons among civilians is one of the drivers of conflict. That is why we again call upon the international community to help implement the plan. Its positive impact will not be limited to Darfur alone, but to all of the Sudan.

Furthermore, the measures that the Government of the Sudan intends to undertake in cooperation with its brotherly and neighbouring States are significant, especially in terms of limiting the flow of weapons. That is an important question that also requires the assistance and attention of the international community.

Following the Council's adoption of resolution 2363 (2017), which enshrines the Secretary-General's proposals and those of the African Union's Commission aimed at reconfiguring UNAMID and reducing its size, the Sudanese Government reaffirmed its commitment to cooperating and coordinating with UNAMID to implement the resolution.

The first stage saw the closure of three positions, and we intend to close 11 more towards the end of the year. The withdrawal and closure of various UNAMID positions sends a positive signal that international community confirms that the situation has returned to normal and that security is being maintained. That has been demonstrated through the massive return of displaced persons to their villages, as well as the addition of a great many heads and chiefs of rebel movements to the peace process. Consultations are still under way and are taking place at various levels. They are aimed at convincing the other chiefs and heads of armed groups to join the peace process under the auspices of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel.

At a logical and political level, the changes that we are witnessing in Darfur force us to reconsider the sanctions that have been imposed on the Sudan since 2005 pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005). Those sanctions must be reviewed. We are open to listen to and consider any ideas, including those presented by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

As we have stated on numerous occasions, the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur remains the only way to achieve lasting peace in Darfur. It is one of the more comprehensive solutions among those aimed at eliminating the crisis. Despite the mild refusal of certain heads of rebel groups to support the Document, over 85 per cent of its provisions have been implemented. There is therefore a need to continue along that course in order to ensure that peace returns to Darfur and all of the Sudan.

Efforts made by Qatar, the sponsor of the Doha Document for Peace, to rehabilitate Darfur and rebuild villages in order to facilitate the voluntary return of citizens to the region, as well as its support for development projects, have contributed significantly to the current situation in Darfur. We would also like to thank many other brotherly States, such as China, Japan and Turkey, as well as the League of Arab States. The Government of the Sudan wishes to see the international community continue to lend its support to ensure that we are able to implement the remaining aspects of the Doha Document and to convince non-signatory parties to accede to it as soon as possible. Thus, we could put an end to fighting, which would enable us to implement disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes, the return of refugees and reconciliation among communities.

In conclusion, we would like to convey our gratitude to UNAMID for its many contributions. We would like to pay tribute to the peacekeepers who have laid down their lives for the Sudan. Finally, we would like to express our gratitude to troop- and police-contributing countries. We would like to reiterate our readiness to cooperate with regional and international partners until all components of UNAMID have left our country — thereby demonstrating and proving the success of this huge peacekeeping operation.

The President: I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of the subject.

The meeting rose at 11.20 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.8051

Security Council

Seventy-second year

Provisional

8051st meeting

Wednesday, 20 September 2017, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Desalegn	(Ethiopia)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Llorentty Solíz
	China	Mr. Wang Yi
	Egypt	Mr. Al Sisi
	France	Mr. Le Drian
	Italy	Mr. Gentiloni Silveri
	Japan	Mr. Kono
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Abdrakhmanov
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Senegal	Mr. Sall
	Sweden	Mr. Löfven
	Ukraine	Mr. Poroshenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mrs. May
	United States of America	Mr. Pence
	Uruguay	Mr. Loedel

Agenda

United Nations peacekeeping operations

Reform of United Nations peacekeeping: implementation and follow-up

Letter dated 22 August 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2017/766)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

17-29377 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Expression of sympathy in connection with the earthquakes in Mexico and the tropical storms on the Atlantic coast and in the Caribbean

The President: At the outset of this meeting, I should like, on behalf of the members of the Security Council, to express our sadness at the loss of life and damage resulting from the earthquake that took place yesterday in Mexico. The members of the Council would like to extend their condolences to the Government and the people of Mexico, which has suffered two significant earthquakes in just two weeks. The Council members would also like to offer their condolences to all the victims of the tropical storms that have buffeted the Atlantic coast and the Caribbean this season, and I wish a speedy recovery for all who have been affected by that natural disaster.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

United Nations peacekeeping operations

Reform of United Nations peacekeeping: implementation and follow-up

Letter dated 22 August 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2017/766)

The President: I wish to warmly welcome the Heads of State and Government, Ministers and other representatives here in the Security Council Chamber. Their presence today underscores the importance of the subject matter under discussion.

I am also delighted to welcome our briefers: His Excellency the Secretary-General; His Excellency Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission; and His Excellency Mr. José Ramos-Horta, Chairperson of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations.

Members have before them a list of speakers who have requested to participate in today's meeting, in accordance with rules 37 and 39 of the Council's rules of procedure and the previous practice of the Council in that regard. I propose that they be invited to participate in this meeting.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2017/766, which contains the text of a letter dated 22 August 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept note on the item under consideration.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Secretary-General António Guterres.

The Secretary-General: I thank this month's presidency of the Security Council, Ethiopia, for being such a steadfast contributor to peacekeeping. Its personnel are on the front lines in some of our most challenging missions, and we are extremely grateful for that commitment.

Today we gather to fortify this flagship United Nations activity. Every day, peacekeepers create conditions for lasting peace that protect civilians, such as the hundreds of thousands in South Sudan and the Central African Republic who have sought refuge. Across the years and across the globe, 55 peacekeeping operations have successfully completed their mandates. Many political missions have done the same. Four missions are downsizing or closing soon, their job completed, and the strategies to ensure a smooth transition in these situations are absolutely crucial.

Peacekeeping remains a highly cost-effective instrument. The people of Haiti and Côte D'Ivoire will enjoy a brighter future thanks in part to the support of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti and the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire. I pay tribute to the many peacekeepers who have paid the ultimate price in carrying out this vital work.

(*spoke in French*)

Despite the evident successes, peacekeeping operations can at times be disappointing and apparently lacking in prospects, unable to bring decades-old engagements to an end. This prompts us to engage in reflection about our goals, the means with which we avail ourselves, and our ability to implement complex mandates and to meet multiple ambitions. Peace operations are deployed in difficult environments where the United Nations is at times the sole party able and willing to act. Peace operations are subject

to significant and perhaps overly weighty expectations insofar as they must address urgent situations while contributing to long-term solutions. Peace operations often face situations of such complexity that it is illusory to hope that a solution can be provided over the course of a few years.

(*spoke in English*)

The High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, whose recommendations remain at the heart of our efforts to advance collective security, called for four critical shifts. My reform efforts aim in part to bring them about.

First, we must recognize the primacy of politics so that peace operations are deployed in support of active diplomatic efforts, not as a substitute. My proposals for the Secretariat's peace and security architecture seek to strengthen the link between political strategies and operations and between peace and security and the development and human rights pillars of our work. If we can do better on prevention, mediation and peacebuilding, we can reduce the unrealistic and dangerous demands on our colleagues in uniform.

Secondly, peace operations should be properly equipped. It is time to fill critical gaps in technology, transportation and situational awareness. More mobility, better equipment and enhanced training and intelligence will allow us to do a better job and, eventually, with smaller numbers.

Thirdly, peace operations must embody United Nations values. Since the earliest days of my tenure, I have sent strong signals of my determination to stamp out sexual exploitation and abuse. In one important sign of progress, Member States are now certifying prior to deployment that none of their personnel has a history of misconduct or human rights violations, and the Secretariat also vets certain senior personnel. We have just appointed the first-ever victims-rights advocate, and we are taking other strong steps to promote accountability. In keeping with an Organization-wide plan to achieve gender parity, I am making a push for more female officers and troops in our operations. More women in peacekeeping means more effective peacekeeping.

Fourthly, we must build stronger partnerships. The Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for an Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, signed in April, is a crucial step. Beyond their troop contributions, African States have assumed important responsibilities for peace and security in the continent. All across Africa, we are working closely with regional and subregional partners, from the African Union Mission in Somalia to the Group of Five for the Sahel (G-5 Sahel) to the Multinational Joint Task Force in the Lake Chad basin. I call on the Security Council to enhance its support, including through the clarity of mandates and predictable funding, in particular to the G-5 Sahel, in order to operationalize the force in the Sahel, and to the Multinational Joint Task Force battling Boko Haram.

Our partnership with the European Union (EU) is also crucial, and I look forward to signing a framework agreement with the EU and to exploring the possibility of establishing trilateral collaborative mechanisms.

These partnerships are especially important given the multiple tasks that are being undertaken. We now face the needs of peace enforcement and counter-terrorism, and the precarious environments in which we operate require additional efforts. It is clear that peacekeeping forces are not supposed to do peace enforcement or counter-terrorism. We need to take advantage of the complementarity that must exist between the United Nations and regional and other organizations. I appeal again to the Security Council to ensure, in that regard, clarity of mandates and adequate funding.

(*spoke in French*)

In the coming months, we will advance in the implementation of these reforms, which should enable us to better fulfil our tasks. In the short term, I have asked for a review of peacekeeping operations to be conducted so as to consider how our operations under way can better respond to the numerous challenges that I have mentioned.

(*spoke in English*)

With the Security Council's partnership and support, we can adapt peace operations to meet both the old and the new tests alike and to be more effective and more cost-effective.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Mahamat.

Mr. Mahamat (*spoke in French*): It is always a fresh honour and a privilege for us to be invited to speak

before the Council. Allow me first of all to express our gratitude to all the Member States represented here.

I am all the more pleased to address them in that our meeting today is being held in the framework of the presidency of the Council under the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. I congratulate and warmly thank His Excellency Mr. Hailemariam Desalegn, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, for initiating this debate on peacekeeping operations and for having forged over many months, along with all the other African members of the Council, the salutary unity and consistency of our positions, as well as for their outstanding advocacy work. We offer them our profound gratitude in the name not only of the African Union, but also and especially in that of the peoples of our continent, which we always seek to place at the heart of our action.

Today's debate gives us a new opportunity to take stock of and to question our shared, real and good-faith resolve to move forward on the question of the financing of operations mandated or authorized by the African Union through the contributions of the United Nations. As we see it, swift and decisive progress on this issue is crucial to bolstering the credibility of the partnership between our two organizations. For let us not deceive ourselves: our many meetings and exchanges at the institutional level, however productive they may be, as well as our declarations of principle, will have no effect if they are not followed up by concrete decisions and actions by all of us.

In that regard, I would like to clearly reiterate our resolute, ongoing determination to very quickly arrive at a substantive draft resolution that recognizes our contribution to the global peace and security architecture and endorses the principle that African Union peace-support operations that have the endorsement of the Security Council could be supported through United Nations assessed contributions. That is a question of justice for us.

I often hear that the African Peace and Security Architecture aims to provide African solutions for African problems. However, that seems to me a narrow interpretation of the thinking that inspired the very doctrine that underlies the innovative tool that is our Architecture. It seems clear to us that the problems in Africa are not problems of Africans alone. Certainly, the causes of those problems are not unique to Africa. I think there is now a common understanding that the consequences of the crises faced by the African continent do not affect just Africans.

It is because of the fact that, irrespective of their causes or origins, the problems in Africa first and foremost affect Africans themselves that the African Union has always emphasized, and assumed, its leadership in facing up to them. But we also underscore that the complexity of the issues and crises involved is such that no single organization can provide the full range of responses required. It therefore seems to us to be both fair and timely for the international community to recognize, through concrete decisions, the efforts of the African Union and its member States on this matter. It is also important to stress that ad hoc arrangements do not allow for lasting solutions.

In our view, a substantive draft resolution on the issue of the financing, through assessed contributions, of operations mandated or authorized by the African Union that subsequently receive the endorsement of the Security Council would not be a mechanism that would systematically open up access to the financial resources of the United Nations. It is understood that the specific decisions to be taken on a case-by-case basis by the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union on assigning the mandates of the operations concerned will be subject to a concerted and collaborative process of analysis, evaluation, planning and reporting to be conducted by our respective secretariats.

From our point of view, no relevant argument can justify our common failings to agree, here and today, on such a substantive draft resolution. Like all other similar organizations, the African Union has had failures, but it remains committed to addressing them. This is not about our complying with a check-list imposed from the outside. Rather, it is based on an ethical requirement that we have set for ourselves, according to a time frame we equally imposed on ourselves. This ethical requirement has bearing not just on the strength of our institutional credibility; above all, it has to do with our people themselves, who are the very reason for the existence of our organization.

For us, though, it is also about the need for a convergence of views. Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations should enable regional organizations, such as the African Union, to contribute fully to the maintenance of international peace and security, in view of their proximity to the field, their knowledge of

local dynamics and their capacities to respond quickly. That would confer additional credibility upon the African Union by virtue of the Security Council being the embodiment of international legality.

Without delay, we must all equip ourselves with the means to achieve that goal for the sake of our common interests. We must avoid opting for the easy way out of evoking possible failings on either sides in order not to adopt a draft resolution wisely inspired by tragic situations we experienced several decades ago — or even more recently, as is the case of Mali or the Central African Republic, where we all had to react to events, whereas we could have shown more initiative.

The African Union's approach to the principle of the use of assessed contributions should therefore not be seen as a hand-out. It is not a question of charity, but of fairness.

Let me say it again: our continental organization remains determined to translate the commitments it has freely embraced on financing and assuming a share of its peace-support operations. Our efforts will continue and intensify, regardless of the reluctance currently displayed by a minority of actors. I believe that this is a historical responsibility that everyone should bear as appropriate.

I would like to conclude by urging the Council to take decisions that encourage the outstanding progress made by the African Union and its member States and to pay tribute to the sacrifices made, especially when such progress is mentioned here at the Organization. The African Union must be given the right and the capacity to improve and transform itself dynamically.

In addition, allow me to encourage the Council to make a concrete and resolute commitment to the strategic partnership between our two organizations by adopting a substantive draft resolution on the issue of financing peace-support operations. That would help us to avoid validating the criticisms often levelled against us by our real masters — the citizens of our member States — for having spent years now making rhetorical statements and engaging in bureaucratic processes that quite frequently do not lead to the results expected of us.

The President: I thank Mr. Mahamat for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Ramos-Horta.

Mr. Ramos-Horta: On behalf of my colleagues who served with me on the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO), I commend you, Mr. Prime Minister, and the Permanent Mission of Ethiopia for this very timely initiative. I also thank you, Sir, for the invitation extended to me to participate today. Sitting behind me is my colleague Ian Martin, who will be very familiar to many members of the Security Council.

It is very gratifying to us that our report (see S/2015/446) and recommendations were so well received by Member States. Indeed, our report was not written by Ivy League academics or doctoral students without field experience. I was privileged to work with eminent achievers with deep experience of peacekeeping and special political missions. After criss-crossing the globe in our consultations, our report reflected the collective experience and recommendations of hundreds of people from many walks of life — retired and serving military and police officers who saw wars up-close, and community leaders and activists who live in the midst of conflicts.

We acknowledge the extent to which former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon embraced our recommendations, the consideration they have been given by the General Assembly and by the Security Council, and the work already undertaken by the Secretariat towards their implementation. But the essential shifts advocated by HIPPO remain to be achieved.

The three peace and security reviews — on peace operations, the peacebuilding architecture and of the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda — as well as the World Humanitarian Summit, converged on the crucial need for more effective conflict prevention and for working to sustain peace before, during and after conflict. Last month, the Council was reminded of HIPPO's approach to sustaining peace when our colleague Youssef Mahmoud contributed to its discussion of the contribution of peacekeeping operations to this overarching goal (see S/PV.8033). The Council has embraced this priority, and no Secretary-General has made a stronger commitment to prevention and the necessary surge of diplomacy than has Secretary-General Guterres. We see it reflected in his insistence on an integrated system-wide commitment to prevention, in the way in which he has organized his Executive Office, in his proposals for reform of the development system as well as of the peace and security architecture, and in his appointment of a High-

level Advisory Board on Mediation — half of whose members are women, consistent with his commitment to gender parity and HIPPO's emphasis on the role of women in all aspects of sustaining peace.

It is national leaders and stakeholders who have the primary responsibility to prevent conflicts and engage in mediation, and the United Nations should seek to support local and regional prevention and mediation partners. Our report emphasized that the United Nations must invest in its own capacities to undertake prevention and mediation and in its capacity to assist others, particularly at the national and regional levels. These core United Nations functions must, we said, be funded under the regular budget, and not be dependent on voluntary funding. Member States should support the Secretary-General in these mediation efforts, both politically and financially.

Secretary-General Ban wisely asked our Panel to review peace operations, not peacekeeping missions alone, and he accepted our recommendation that the United Nations should embrace the term "peace operations". Our intention was not to move away from the principles of peacekeeping, which we said remained valid, but maintaining sharp distinctions between peacekeeping operations and special political missions should give way to a continuum of responses and smoother transitions between different phases of missions. He accepted our critique of the dysfunction of the present departmental configuration, which has hampered the effective design and conduct of peace operations, but rightly left it to his successor to consider a restructuring.

I believe that the proposals for restructuring the peace and security pillar, which Secretary-General Guterres has now outlined, meet the two greatest concerns of HIPPO. The management of both peacekeeping operations and large field-based special political missions by the same department will enable situation-specific responses tailored to context and smoother transitions as those contexts evolve. The single political-operational structure under regional Assistant Secretaries-General that would link the two reconfigured departments will not only overcome duplication and rivalry, but will ensure that peace operations are designed and managed within their regional context and in closer consultation with the relevant regional organizations. Our report said that the essential shifts we outlined would not be achieved without restructuring. This reform proposal is therefore to be warmly welcomed.

The Council has been concerned with seeing reviews of individual peace operations carried out, and our report itself recommended a review of long-standing missions to assess their effectiveness. We addressed the shortcomings of the Secretariat's policy, analysis and strategy-development processes, and stressed the need for a core capacity for strategic analysis and assessment, including in the planning and review of peace operations. We also recommended that independent evaluations of peace operations should be commissioned at key decision points. The Secretary-General's establishment of a strategic planning and monitoring unit in his Executive Office is precisely the reform that has been required to ensure better planning and reviews — with, I hope, an independent element.

The Council's decisions in mandating peace operations on the basis of such planning and reviews should always reflect the primacy of politics, and I hope the Council will be stronger in its insistence upon and support for the political strategies that peace operations are deployed to pursue. While some reviews may properly lead to reduction of resources, I would remind the Council that both the Brahimi report (S/2000/809) and the HIPPO report emphasized that mandates, resources, expectations and capabilities must be in alignment if peace operations are not to be set up for failure.

It is a pleasure to recall in the presence of Secretary-General Guterres and Chairperson Mahamat the emphasis our report placed on partnerships with regional organizations, in particular the African Union (AU), and to warmly welcome their signature in April of the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for an Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security. I reiterate here today HIPPO's support for flexible, sustainable and predictable funding for the AU peace operations that the Council authorizes, and for the use of United Nations assessed contributions on a case-by-case basis. I emphasize too our belief in the importance of United Nations regional offices as forward platforms for conflict prevention in partnership with regional actors, of which the successful efforts early this year to resolve the crisis in the Gambia were an excellent example.

In arguing for an essential shift to field-focused administration, HIPPO presented the distinct needs

of the field. We know that the Secretary-General, coming to Headquarters from a field agency, fully intends his management-reform proposals to provide the delegation of authority that is absolutely essential to those who provide the services to the field and to expedite service delivery and recruitment. From the HIPPO perspective, both the changes in management and policy and the operational support that is proposed to be provided to both Headquarters and the field by a single department must be rigorously assessed as to their impact in the field. We urge Member States to take whatever decisions are required to fully support such a delegation.

HIPPO's advocacy of an essential shift towards more people-centred peace operations has been widely quoted, and should be taken to heart by the leadership of every peace operation. Critical for the moral credibility of a peace operation is effective action to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse. The Secretary-General has given the leadership required and has gone far beyond the recommendations we made in 2015. We urge Member States to enter into the compacts he proposes.

In conclusion, in the course of 40 years — when I first came to the Council, I was 25 years old, the youngest person in the Chamber — today, as I survey the Chamber, I seem to be the oldest — starting as an innocent and romantic believer in the promises and possibilities of the United Nations, I have seen the best — when it lived up to the expectations of the people it deployed to protect — but also shocking betrayals on other front lines. I have engaged with United Nations personnel in my own country and in remote outposts where dedicated field staff have to bear the indifference of Headquarters, whose envoys descended on us, when I was in the field, to evaluate the mission, yet things stay the same. The United Nations can do better. The Council can do better. I trust that today's debate will mark a significant step on the road to the improvements that the High-level Panel has marked out.

The President: I thank Mr. Hortas-Ramos for his briefing.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2017/781, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Algeria, Australia, Belgium, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czech Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Egypt, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Morocco, Nepal, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Peru, the Republic of Korea, Romania, the Russian Federation, Rwanda, Senegal, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United Republic of Tanzania, the United States of America, Uruguay and Viet Nam.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bolivia (Plurinational State of), China, Egypt, Ethiopia, France, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, Senegal, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Uruguay

The President: The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been unanimously adopted as resolution 2378 (2017).

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the Prime Minister of Ethiopia.

Let me start by expressing my appreciation to Secretary-General Guterres for his remarks and his efforts to strengthen United Nations peacekeeping. We also thank Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat for being here with us today and for his commitment to enhancing the United Nations-African Union partnership. We are also grateful to President José Ramos-Horta for joining us and for his insightful briefing on where we are in terms of the reform of United Nations peacekeeping operations two years after the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, which he chaired, presented its report (see S/2015/446).

Ethiopia welcomes the unanimous adoption of resolution 2378 (2017), and we thank all the member of the Security Council for their inputs and contributions during the negotiations. We also thank all those members that co-sponsored the resolution in a demonstration of their commitment to strengthening United Nations peacekeeping as one of the important

tools in the promotion and maintenance of international peace and security.

The adoption of this important resolution has particular significance for Ethiopia as one of the leading troop-contributing countries to United Nations peacekeeping operations. Our contingents were among the peacekeepers deployed in the early days of United Nations peacekeeping. They were also among the peacekeepers deployed in the Congo to stabilize the country in the early days of that country's independence. Ethiopian peacekeepers also played an important role in the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide and the civil war in Liberia. More than 8,000 Ethiopian peacekeepers are serving today as Blue Helmets in Darfur, Abyei and South Sudan. Ethiopia takes pride in its important role in United Nations peacekeeping, and today we are pleased to have made a modest contribution to advancing the reform of United Nations peacekeeping by proposing the resolution we just adopted.

We are meeting here today two years after major reviews were conducted focused on the United Nations peace and security architecture, as well as two years after the holding of the leaders' summit on peacekeeping. We therefore hope that this debate will afford us an opportunity to reflect on how far we have come in undertaking a reform of United Nations peacekeeping and to chart the way forward. I am glad to highlight four points in that regard.

First, we believe the Council has a key role in strengthening United Nations peacekeeping, as its mandates authorizes the missions' deployment. Therefore, adequate implementation and follow-up by the Council of United Nations peacekeeping reform, in accordance with existing mandates and procedures, is extremely important. We welcome the decision by the Council today to entrust its Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations with reviewing reform initiatives, in close cooperation with other Member States, including troop- and police-contributing countries and host countries.

Secondly, as much as United Nations peacekeeping reform is important, the Council has not held a dedicated debate to discuss this issue comprehensively and assess the progress made. That is why we welcome the decision to hold this annual debate on the basis of a comprehensive annual briefing by the Secretary-General. It is also essential that the discussion take place at this time of the year, when world leaders gather in New York for the opening of the General Assembly's annual session, in order to keep peacekeeping reform high on the agenda.

Thirdly, we all know that the environment under which many peacekeepers operate has dramatically changed, but peacekeepers are not equipped with the necessary capabilities to carry out their mandates and protect civilians while also ensuring their own safety and security. That is why, two years ago, a number of commitments and pledges were made to address this issue. We welcome the updates provided by the Secretary-General to the Security Council as part of this comprehensive briefing on the continuous efforts made in filling the existing gaps in terms of force-generation and capabilities and other relevant aspects necessary for peacekeeping to effectively and appropriately respond to peace and security challenges.

Fourthly, we appreciate the Secretary-General's initiative to reform the United Nations peace and security architecture, both in the Secretariat and in the field. It is important that the Council send a political message to the Secretary-General welcoming his reform efforts. We believe that his continuous engagement with the Council and the General Assembly's various intergovernmental committees will be very important in moving the reform process forward.

Last but not least, enhancing global and regional partnerships is one of the most important pillars of reforming United Nations peacekeeping. Given the current global security dynamics, the United Nations cannot handle new and emerging peace and security challenges alone, and forging effective partnerships with a regional and subregional organizations is the most sensible and logical thing to do. Tht has already been well recognized, but what matters at this stage is taking practical steps in that direction, in the spirit of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, including through the sharing of burdens.

Let us be frank: there is a great deficit on this issue, and it is high time that the contributions and sacrifices of United Nations peacekeepers and of those deployed after having been authorized by the Security Council be acknowledged in an earnest and meaningful way. It is encouraging to note that the Council has expressed its intention to give further consideration to practical steps that can be taken and to the necessary conditions to establish the mechanisms through which African Union-led peace support operations authorized by the

Security Council and under its authority under Chapter VIII of the Charter could be partly financed through United Nations-assessed contributions on a case-by-case basis.

Our hope and expectation was that the Council would go further than that. What Chairperson Mahamat just told us today encapsulates the sentiments in Africa on this important issue. Nevertheless, we understand the dynamics in the Council and we will continue to engage with members to make progress on this issue, while building on what has been agreed to today. We believe this is not only fair and appropriate; it is also in the best interest of our collective security.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now invite His Excellency Mr. Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal, to take the floor.

President Sall (*spoke in French*): I would genuinely like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting on implementing the recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peacekeeping Operations.

Peacekeeping missions are often deployed in hostile environments, where armed and extremist groups target our peacekeepers — not to mention the lack of cooperation from certain host countries. Too often, current missions are going beyond the strict peacekeeping security framework and taking on aspects such as economic and humanitarian assistance, protecting human rights, providing assistance to displaced persons and even refugee management within host countries. The recommendations set out in the report (see S/2015/446) of the High-level Panel, as well as those in the subsequent report (S/2015/682) of the Secretary-General, call for bold measures whose effective implementation should allow peacekeeping operations to enter a new phase in accomplishing their missions. I would like to congratulate Secretary-General António Guterres for his resolved determination in advancing the agenda on peacekeeping operations reform.

I would now like to focus on the relationships between stakeholders. I believe that the Security Council should strengthen its cooperation with countries neighbouring conflicts as well as with regional and subregional organizations — specifically with the African Union. With that in mind, the eleventh annual joint consultations between the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council, which this year took place in Addis Ababa on 7 and 8 September, should help to further harness the benefits of that dynamic of cooperation. To that end, defining the mandates of operations should, from now on, be based on objective and complete information. Before any forces are deployed, we must first conduct a frank and clear assessment of requirements, in particular with regard to resources and equipment.

I would like to focus on the example of the Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), which we are all familiar with. It is currently the United Nations most deadly mission, with peacekeepers being killed throughout the year. Imagine what MINUSMA would be like without the presence of the French forces of Operation Barkhane, which took on the baton of responsibility in January 2013. Despite the presence of 10,000 Blue Helmets in Mali, today our soldiers still face unsafe circumstances. Sahel countries and the African Union have frequently called for the strengthening of the mandate, to make it more robust and, accordingly, to provide United Nations forces with the equipment required and clear missions. As we know, it is not always a matter of maintaining peace, as sometimes we have to impose peace to save human lives. We cannot do that against well-equipped hostile forces. Therefore, I think that the very nature of peacekeeping mandates must evolve to avoid spending endless amounts of money — with the outcome, as we just heard from the Chair of the Panel, being ineffective.

Another key issue that the Security Council must address is that of strengthening triangular discussions among the Security Council, the troop-contributing countries and the Secretariat in order to foster a spirit of partnership, cooperation and mutual trust. In terms of regional offices, I think the Chair is correct in saying that preventive diplomacy should be prioritized. Therefore, we must boost the quality of the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General. In my view, they should be respected persons who are able to speak directly with the Heads of State of the region concerned. Whatever the case, we need thinking on this issue. In fact, I think it is not simply a matter of United Nations officials, but also of having people in place who can have influence on Heads of State, since it is the Heads of State who can get those responsible to get things done.

As Chair of the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations, Senegal has contributed to the undertaking of implementing the recommendations of the report of

the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations report, by organizing thematic discussions to support stakeholder dialogue. Similarly, along with the United States of America, Senegal co-initiated resolution 2320 (2016), on cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union, which served to launch a consultation process between the two organizations to define the modalities and mechanisms to enable effective management of the issue.

Finally, I would like to reiterate Senegal's commitment to peacekeeping missions. It is laudable that, through resolution 2154 (2014), the Security Council commemorated the Senegalese presence by establishing, on 8 May 2014, the Captain Mbaye Diagne Medal for Exceptional Courage, to honour United Nations military, police, civilian and associated personnel who have endured extreme danger in the service of humankind and the United Nations.

The professionalism of our troops also depends upon their ability to refrain from any act of misconduct that could tarnish the image and reputation of the United Nations.

The President: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Abdel Fattah Al Sisi, President of Arab Republic of Egypt, to take the floor.

President Al Sisi (*spoke in Arabic*): It is my great pleasure to participate in this Security Council meeting organized by Ethiopia on the issue of peacekeeping operations. At the outset, I would like to welcome the adoption of resolution 2378 (2017), on the issue of peacekeeping reform, as a step towards enhancing the United Nations peace and security architecture.

Egypt was among the very first countries to contribute to peacekeeping operations, having participated in the first-ever mission, deployed to the Congo in 1960. Today Egypt ranks seventh in the top 10 troop-contributing countries. We have participated in 37 missions, with a total contribution of 30,000 uniformed personnel, since we began participating in peacekeeping operations across Asia, Africa, Latin America and Europe.

Over the past decades, Egypt has responded to peacekeeping needs and has never refrained from participating — even in the most complex security situations — while maintaining the training, readiness and capability of its troops as a top priority. Furthermore, our compliance with the highest standards of conduct and discipline and zero tolerance for any form of misconduct is considered exemplary. Egypt has also contributed significantly to building regional capacity, in particular in the African and Arab regions.

As we welcome today's resolution on peacekeeping reform, we hope that it will be the first of many steps to ensure effective United Nations peacekeeping, while focusing on addressing technical and operational gaps, in order to include a comprehensive approach that aims to prevent conflict and sustain peace. In that regard, the role of peacekeeping and decision-making needs to be further articulated. In that connection, I would like to highlight the following points.

First, without prejudice to the significance of peacekeeping as the most important tool for maintaining international peace and security, it should not be the only tool to be deployed. Peacekeeping should not be an alternative to preventive diplomacy, mediation, peacebuilding efforts or any other political, economic or social tool for addressing the root causes of conflict and ensuring social cohesion. Peacekeeping should not be the initial reaction to every conflict.

Especially over the past three years, Egypt has repeatedly called for a new strategic approach that includes comprehensive, pragmatic political and programmatic plans, as well as adjusting mandates according to political and operational developments throughout the lifecycle of conflict. Such an approach is in line not just with the vision of a number of Member States, but also with the Secretary General's vision. I take this opportunity to commend the Secretary-General on his efforts to revitalize the tools at the disposal of the Secretariat, including its political tools. Those efforts must be commended and supported.

Egypt believes that such a strategic approach is crucial in addressing the complex challenges and consequences of armed conflicts. Most notably, that includes the weakening of State institutions, the ability to provide basic services, the breakdown of the social fabric and other challanges. In addition, that approach is also crucial given the direct relationship between conflicts and the threat of terrorism and organized crime, as well as other threats and challenges to peace and security.

Secondly, Egypt has always called upon the international community to prioritize its efforts to resolve conflicts rather than simply manage them, which has been the status quo for decades with no

potential for a political solution. Unfortunately, this is very much evident in conflicts in the Arab region and the African continent, where we witness relapses due to unresolved political, social and economic causes. In that context, I would like to echo the conclusions of the 2015 reviews of the United Nations peace and security architecture, which emphasized the primacy of political solutions as the basic task for both peacekeeping and special political missions.

Thirdly, peacekeeping operations must not substitute the role of Governments and host State institutions. Peacekeeping operations must not become trusteeship mechanisms, rather, they must provide an enabling security and political environment for nationally owned reconciliation and peacebuilding efforts in line with the priorities of those States and communities. In that regard, I would like to emphasize that any attempts to impose templates of political systems that have proven successful in countries thousands of miles away have repeatedly failed. Instead, we must take into account the political, cultural and social specificities of every country in order to ensure the success of our peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts.

Along the same lines, I would like to highlight the important and central role of peacekeeping operations in the protection of civilians. However, that role must not override the responsibility of the host country to protect its nationals. Peacekeeping operations should instead focus on building host State capacities. In that regard, Egypt believes that it is imperative that the mandates of United Nations missions mirror the priorities and specific needs of those countries.

Fourthly, allow me to be frank. Attempts to monopolize mandate-formulation by some Member States without taking into account the concerns of troop-contributing countries does not aid the success of peacekeeping missions. In fact, the absence of meaningful consultations with troop- and police-contributing countries is detrimental to the implementation of their tasks, in view of the lack of a common understanding among the Security Council, the Secretariat and the troop-contributing countries. Therefore, I call upon the Security Council to support the establishment of an effective and institutionalized triangular consultative mechanism among the three stakeholder — the Security Council, the Secretariat and the troop-contributing countries — which would reinforce agreement on common objectives when drafting or renewing the mandates of peacekeeping operations.

Lastly, it should be undoubtedly clear that the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security falls upon the Security Council. However, we must also recognize the vital role of regional organizations in conflict zones, as stipulated in Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter. More specifically, I would like to highlight the role of the African Union, which represents a successful model for partnership with the United Nations. The rehatting of African Union operations into United Nations operations and the success of hybrid operations conducted by both organizations underscore the central role of the African Peace and Security Architecture in conflict resolution, not just conflict management, on the African continent.

That partnership and cooperation could be further developed and utilized based on the comparative advantages of the United Nations and the African Union. That is particularly relevant at a time when the United Nations is attempting to optimize the use of its resources. To that end, I would like to emphasize the importance of implementing the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for an Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, which was signed in April.

Moreover, the United Nations must also develop its partnership with other regional organizations and contribute to enhancing their effectiveness in responding to regional conflicts by developing their mediation and early-warning tools and cooperating with them to deploy observers and peacekeeping missions, if required. In that regard, I would like to highlight the potential role that the League of Arab States could play in support of promoting peace and stability in the Arab region.

In conclusion, as one of the top troop- and police-contributing countries, Egypt is committed to continuing to play its regional and international role in addressing challenges to peace, security and stability through its active participation in international and regional organizations and its robust contributions to peacekeeping operations.

The President: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Petro Poroshenko, President of Ukraine, to take the floor.

President Poroshenko: First of all, I thank you, Mr. President, for making this summit possible. It is only fair that this seminal meeting is taking place during

Ethiopia's presidency of the Security Council — a nation with an outstanding peacekeeping record.

It is undoubtedly true that, to be up to speed with an unpredictable world, the United Nations peacekeeping endeavour badly needs reform, as does the whole United Nations system. That is why it is high time to assess the current state of play, ongoing reform efforts and prospects for United Nations peacekeeping. I sincerely hope that this debate, along with resolution 2378 (2017), which we just adopted, and which Ukraine co-sponsored, will contribute to this vital exercise.

I must admit that, since the latest discussion of this issue, at the leaders' summit on peacekeeping in 2015, the world is becoming less and less safe. War and aggression are spreading, while peace and goodwill are in retreat. Our Organization, which was created to secure peace and stability in the world, cannot afford to stand aside. It must be proactive, as outlined in the reviews of United Nations peacekeeping and peacebuilding capabilities, which regrettably remain under-implemented in practice. In that light, we welcome and fully support the efforts of the Secretary-General to develop and implement a robust, comprehensive United Nations reform agenda that rightly focuses on strengthening the United Nations peace and security architecture. I see a number of essential ingredients for success in that regard.

The first is a truly proactive role for the Secretary-General in carrying out his responsibilities as set out in Article 99 of the Charter of the United Nations.

No less important is the task of protecting civilians, which has evolved into an integral part of peacekeeping.

Due attention should also be given to securing proper funding and sufficient capabilities, including aviation assets, advanced intelligence and modern technologies. Moving from traditional peacekeeping to cost-effective smart peacekeeping is long overdue.

Last, but not least, I commend the initiative of the Secretary-General to eradicate the scourge of sexual exploitation and abuse, which continues to overshadow United Nations peacekeeping achievements. As a responsible Member State, Ukraine signed the relevant compact with the Secretary-General. We look forward to its early implementation across United Nations operations.

I am proud that Ukraine has been a strong partner of the Organization in peacekeeping activities for many years. Ukrainian Blue Helmets have participated in United Nations operations throughout the world. In many cases they were indeed instrumental in reaching peace, from the Balkans to Africa. Ukraine's involvement in United Nations peacekeeping did not wane even at the height of the armed attack on my country by the Russian Federation. But today we, too, need the peacekeeping shoulder of the United Nations.

As the Council is well aware, in 2014 Russia unleashed an armed aggression against Ukraine and occupied part of our territory. Russia's mantra that "we are not there" does not hold water. It is an undeniable fact that Russia creates, leads, controls and sponsors terrorist operations in Donbas. Here is further evidence: these are the identification cards of Russian officers and soldiers, some of whom are in Ukrainian prisons for their illegal occupation of Ukrainian land.

The three-year-long Russian aggression has cost Ukraine more than 10,000 lives, with over 25,000 wounded and about 1.8 million internally displaced. In order to restore peace in my country, back in the spring of 2015 I officially requested that the President of the Security Council initiate the appropriate procedure for the deployment of United Nations peacekeeping operations in Ukraine. It has since gained additional urgency.

The situation is not getting better in the Donbas region, despite repeated ceasefire initiatives. Ordinary people continue to suffer. The human rights monitoring mission in Ukraine recorded 169 conflict-related civilian casualties in the period from mid-May to August 2017, leaving 26 dead and 135 injured. Just think of this number — this is happening in the twenty-first century, in the heart of Europe. People's right to life, liberty and freedom of speech continue to be violated on a daily basis. They can be killed for going to the wrong church, speaking in the wrong language or simply for disagreeing. If tragedy of this scale does not warrant a United Nations peace presence, then what does?

In that regard, I would like to reiterate my request to the Council to deploy peacekeepers in Donbas. We need to move forward on this track, the sooner the better. I therefore welcome the start of exchanges among Council members on the way forward. Ukraine is ready to participate constructively. At the same time, I must reiterate that the road to efficient peacekeeping — and eventually to the settlement — lies in the unconditional

withdrawal of all foreign military personnel and mercenaries and their weapons and equipment from Ukraine.

Moreover, reliable international control over the temporarily uncontrolled part of the Ukraine and Russian State border should be secured. That is key, as there can be no success in bringing peace to Donbas without preventing Russian troops, arms, equipment and mercenaries from continuing to infiltrate Donbas.

The deployment of United Nations peacekeeping operations should restore justice, rather than freeze the conflict and cement the occupation. Justice would be to restore Ukraine's sovereignty over its territory. Justice would be to make sure that no one can take away Ukraine's freedom. While designing such a mission, all United Nations peacekeeping principles should be observed. We will insist upon that throughout the negotiation process, no matter how long it takes.

Let me also reiterate our invitation to the Secretary-General to exercise his authority under the Charter of the United Nations and send a technical assessment mission to Ukraine. Based on the mission's analysis, possible options for a United Nations political and security presence in Donbas should be elaborated and presented for further consideration by the Security Council. We expect such a mission to analyse and assess the overall situation on the ground.

In conclusion, I would like to underline that peacekeeping remains one of the most effective instruments to make our world safer and to secure peace. In that regard, let me underscore Ukraine's unwavering commitment to the United Nations peacekeeping endeavour.

The President: I now give the floor to the Vice-President of the United States of America.

Mr. Pence (United States of America): It is a great honour to be with the Security Council today in the midst of the seventy-second session of the General Assembly.

As we gather at this historic Assembly, I know all of our hearts are with the people of Puerto Rico as they face Hurricane Maria and its aftermath, as well as with the people of Mexico City. Even now, as first responders and families seek to save the lost and find those that are injured in the midst of the earthquake that has now claimed more than 200 lives, our hearts and our prayers are with the people of Puerto Rico and the people of Mexico as we gather.

We are here today to discuss what I believe is the most important mission of the United Nations: keeping the peace. Let me begin by thanking Ethiopia for introducing resolution 2378 (2017), on peacekeeping reform. It was my honour, as Vice-President of the United States, to cast a vote in favour of the resolution.

As President Trump said yesterday in his historic address to the General Assembly (see A/72/PV.3), just as each of us should always put our country first, we will always put America first. But as his words and, I hope, our presence here attest, America first does not mean America alone. As the President said, we will forever be a great friend to the world. It is because of that commitment that he sent me here today to the Security Council to reiterate our call for fundamental reforms of United Nations peacekeeping and our determination to see this institution do even more to keep the peace across the wider world.

President Trump and I firmly believe that the United Nations must act to make its peacekeeping operations more efficient, more effective, more accountable and more credible. Ambassador Haley previously laid out the United States principles for peacekeeping reform, and we are all familiar with them. Peacekeeping missions must support a political solution and have the consent of the host country. Its mandates must be realistic and achievable. Every mission must have an exit strategy. And United Nations peacekeeping missions must adjust to progress and failure. In short, when a mission succeeds we should not prolong it; when a mission underperforms we should restructure it; and when a mission consistently fails to fulfil the mandates of the Council, we should end it.

We urge the United Nations to analyse all peacekeeping operations in the light of those principles so that missions most effectively advance peace across the wider world — after all, keeping the peace is at the heart of the United Nations mission. The very first words of the Charter of the United Nations are "to maintain international peace". Just yesterday President Trump challenged this great body to rededicate itself to that noble goal, and I do so today on behalf of our nation before the Security Council.

History records that the United Nations was forged in the fading embers of the Second World War, the most destructive conflict in the history of the world. The United States of America, with our allies, emerged victorious, but in that victory we vowed to come

together to prevent dictators and demagogues from ever threatening the peace that we had won through our shared sacrifice. As President Harry Truman told us then, it was not sufficient to merely check madmen who would plan world domination, but rather to bring together again "a mighty combination of nations founded upon justice for peace". And so we founded this great body, the United Nations.

That was the rallying cry of the United Nations in the twentieth century, and so it must be again in the twenty-first century.

But keeping the peace requires more than peacekeeping; it requires action and the unwavering resolve of every country represented here today. For as President Trump observed yesterday, we are once again confronted "by those who threaten us with chaos, with turmoil and terror", who seek to undermine sovereignty, prosperity and security — all of which the President called the "pillars of peace".

In Eastern Europe, Russia continues to compromise the sovereignty of its neighbours as it seeks to redraw international borders by force. Radical Islamic terrorism continues to beset nations, with barbarous attacks in Barcelona, Paris and London. In the Middle East, the world's leading State sponsor of terrorism continues to flout the spirit of the Iran deal, destabilizing the region and brazenly threatening the security of sovereign nations. And as the world has seen in just the past few days, a depraved regime in North Korea is relentlessly pursuing nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles and now, as the President said, "threatens the entire world with unthinkable loss of human life".

The United States is grateful to see the Security Council unanimously adopt resolutions 2371 (2017) and 2375 (2017), which impose tough new sanctions on the North Korean regime. But to be clear, the United States of America will continue to bring the full range of American power to bear on the regime in Pyongyang. We will continue to marshal economic and diplomatic pressure — ours and from countries across the world — to demand that North Korea abandon its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes. As the President said yesterday, the United States has great strength and patience, but all options are on the table. If we are forced to defend ourselves or our allies, we will do so with military power that is effective and overwhelming. We call on the United Nations and the Security Council to do more to keep the peace — much more — and confront the threat posed by North Korea.

Finally, to keep the peace most effectively, this organ must have the credibility to pursue peace by advancing the cause of human rights. It is no coincidence that some of the most dangerous regimes in the world are also some of the worst abusers of human rights. In Iran, North Korea and other despotic regimes, we see a truth of history borne out once again — those who subvert the freedom of their people at home undermine sovereignty and security abroad.

The United Nations is bound by its Charter to foster international cooperation in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all. That was the purpose under which the United Nations Human Rights Council was formed, but the truth is the Human Rights Council does not deserve its name. As we look at the membership of the Council today, we see nations that betray those timeless principles upon which the Organization was founded. Today the Human Rights Council actually attracts and welcomes many of the worst human rights violators in the world.

A clear majority of the Human Rights Council members failed to meet even the most basic human rights standards. Cuba — an oppressive regime that has repressed its people and jailed political opponents for more than half a century — sits on the Human Rights Council. Venezuela — a dictatorship that undermines democracy at every turn, imprisons political opponents and, as we speak, is advancing policies that worsen deprivation and poverty and are costing the lives of innocent men, women and children — sits on the Human Rights Council.

The Security Council must reform the Human Rights Council's membership and its operation. As to its operation, I think of what President John F. Kennedy warned more than 50 years ago — that the United Nations must not become "a forum for invective". Unfortunately, today the Human Rights Council has become exactly that, and particularly the Human Rights Council has become a forum for anti-Semitism and invective against Israel.

The Council's agenda item 7 actually singles out Israel for discussion at every single meeting — something no other country must endure. As evidence, the Human Rights Council has adopted more than 70 resolutions condemning Israel, while largely ignoring the world's

worst human rights abusers. It is, as President Trump said yesterday, "a massive source of embarrassment", and we call on the Security Council and the entire Organization to immediately embrace reforms of the membership and practices of the Human Rights Council and end the Council's blatant bias against our cherished ally, Israel.

Under President Trump, the United States of America is firmly committed to the cause of human rights because we are committed to keeping the peace. Keeping the peace requires more than peacekeeping; it requires action and reform, and it also requires a willingness to call out senseless attacks on innocent people around the world. At this very moment, in South-East Asia we see heartbreak and assaults on human rights and innocent civilians that are ultimately endangering the sovereignty and security of the entire region. In recent weeks, the people of my country and the wider world have witnessed a great tragedy unfolding in Burma, with the Rohingya people. Recently, Burmese security forces responded to militant attacks on Government outposts with terrible savagery, burning villages and driving the Rohingya from their homes. The images of the violence and its victims have shocked the American people and decent people all over the world. And now we are witnessing a historic exodus. Over 400,000 Rohingya, including tens of thousands of children, have now been forced to flee from Burma to Bangladesh, with more following every day.

Yesterday, Secretary of State Tillerson discussed Rohingya refugees with Aung San Suu Kyi, and urged the Burmese Government and military to facilitate humanitarian aid and confront the allegations of human rights abuses. While we welcome Suu Kyi's comments that returning refugees have nothing to fear, the United States renews its call on Burma's security forces to end their violence immediately and support diplomatic efforts for a long-term solution. President Trump and I also call on the Security Council and the United Nations to take strong and swift action to bring that crisis to an end and give hope and help to the Rohingya people in their hour of need. Unless the violence is stopped, which justice demands, it will only get worse, and it will sow seeds of hatred and chaos that may well consume the region for generations to come and threaten the peace of us all.

As I said, keeping the peace requires more than peacekeeping; it requires action, courage, conviction. And so the United Nations must be prepared to do more, for as President Trump said yesterday:

> "If the righteous many do not confront the wicked few, then evil will triumph. When decent people and nations become bystanders to history, the forces of destruction only gather power and strength." (*A/72/PV.3, p. 11*)

Let us therefore rededicate ourselves to the mission upon which this organ was founded. The first words of Article 1 of the Charter of the United Nations — "to maintain international peace" — must again be our lodestar, our ideal and our aspiration. Through reform of our efforts and reform of this institution, through renewed courage to speak and act whenever and wherever the inalienable rights of innocent people or the peace of the world are at risk, we will create, as our President said, "a more safe and peaceful future for all people".

As the world witnessed yesterday, our President is a man of deep conviction and faith — faith in God and faith in the boundless capacity of peoples and nations founded on peace and justice to improve the world. My prayer today is that this institution might mirror that conviction in renewed ways, in the faith that, as we make every effort to pursue peace, the God of peace will guide us and bless us, today, tomorrow and always, for this generation and our posterity.

The President: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Stefan Löfven, Prime Minister of Sweden, to take the floor.

Mr. Löfven (Sweden): I want to thank Prime Minister Dessalegn for inviting us to this very important event. I thank Secretary-General Guterres for his leadership, including his inspiring intervention at the General Assembly yesterday (see A/72/PV.3) and in the Security Council today. I thank as well Chairperson Mahamat and Mr. Ramos-Horta for their briefings.

Few things inspire me more than the energy and enthusiasm, knowledge, will and determination of our younger generations. Zaida Catalán, a Swedish United Nations expert, had all of that. She dedicated her life to helping others. Earlier this year, at the age of 35, she and a fellow expert, Mr. Michael Sharp of the United States, were killed while on a United Nations mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Women and men from countries all over the world have made many sacrifices in the line of United Nations duty. Some have

lost their lives. I would like to take this opportunity, here in the Security Council, to honour Zaida's memory and the memory of all those who have lost their lives in the service of peace. We also wish to offer our deepest sympathies to their families.

The adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and of our pledge to leave no one behind illustrates the potential of multilateral cooperation. The joint resolutions on sustaining peace, adopted by both the Council and the General Assembly, compel us to prevent and address violent conflict.

Those commitments must guide our work. We must do everything in our power to prevent outbreaks of violence, mass atrocities and armed conflict; to ensure that refugees do not risk their lives making unsafe journeys; to ensure that the current levels of humanitarian suffering — the worst humanitarian crisis since the creation of the United Nations — are never experienced again. That is because only people who feel safe and secure will have faith in the future and contribute to the advancement of their societies. Now more than ever, we need to come together for peaceful and sustainable development instead of going at the task alone and increasing tensions and divisions. Identifying, addressing and preventing the risk of conflict must be front and centre of all our efforts.

For seven decades, United Nations peacekeeping has been instrumental to promoting peace and providing the conditions necessary for political solutions. We need the political will, courage and ability to adapt peacekeeping so that it can remain relevant and adequately resourced and serve as a means to support political processes and solutions. That is because achieving and sustaining peace will always require political solutions, no matter how effective our missions are in themselves. Let me mention three dimensions that I believe need to underpin United Nations peacekeeping in the twenty-first century.

First, we must address emerging threats and tackle the root causes of conflict. Drivers of conflicts are often transboundary and complex. Many of the crises that the world is facing have come about not because we failed to see them coming — on the contrary, the signs of exclusion, marginalization, human rights violations and political, social and economic inequality were there — but because we failed to respond early enough or quickly enough. However, prevention means that not only must we choose to heed the warnings when they come, but that we must invest in peaceful societies in order to avoid the drivers of conflict emerging in the first place. We must address the toughest issues and find responses that may need to be unique to each setting, yet broad in scope. A renewed focus on preventing violent conflict and sustaining peace are the expressed priorities of the Secretary-General. We, the Security Council, should whole-heartedly support him in his endeavour.

Let us recognize the role of peacekeeping in that regard. More than 118,000 military, police and civilian personnel — Blue Berets and Blue Helmets — are currently serving in 16 peacekeeping operations, from Haiti in the West to Jammu and Kashmir in the East. We thank the women and men in peacekeeping missions for the work they do every day on our behalf. Peacekeeping and prevention can, should and must go hand in hand.

Secondly, we need stronger partnerships. Combining the efforts of the United Nations for peace with those of regional and subregional organizations is crucial for success. The partnership between the United Nations and the African Union (AU) is of particular importance. I commend the new partnership framework signed earlier this year. The African Union and its member States are assuming an ever-greater responsibility for peace and security. If we want that partnership to achieve its full potential, we must ensure sustainable and predictable financing, as well as clear and clever cooperation on the ground.

I would also like to highlight the importance of the European Union (EU) as a committed and contributing partner to the United Nations. The Treaty on European Union enshrines the core principles of the Charter of the United Nations. I hope that the partnership between the EU and the United Nations can be developed even further. I hope for the same with respect to the trilateral relationship between the EU, the AU and the United Nations.

Thirdly, United Nations peacekeeping should evolve on the basis of evidence and lessons learned. The experience we gain from our contributions can help to improve and develop United Nations missions in order to make them fit for purpose. Seventy years of peacekeeping have taught us about the need for the full, equal and active participation of women. Sweden constantly seeks to increase the number of women taking part. We have so much more to do. We have learned about the need for realistic, flexible and

properly sequenced mandates. The United Nations system is at its best when it works together as one in countries in conflict, using every tool available to ensure lasting peace.

With Sweden's largest current force contribution to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, we are seeking to develop our toolbox by focusing on intelligence. Intelligence and information are key to protecting United Nations peacekeepers and civilians alike, and they underpin informed and strategic decisions. We are learning to work smartly and to pool our resources. We have painfully learned that peacekeepers must do all they can in order to protect civilians under imminent threats. Additionally, we have learned that there must be nothing but full adherence to the zero-tolerance policy of the United Nations with respect to sexual exploitation and abuse.

Since 1948, more than 80,000 Swedish women and men — troops, police and civilians — have participated in United Nations peace operations, primarily in Africa but also in other parts of the world. They have worn their United Nations helmets in deserts, dirt, dust and danger. We see their Blue Berets in Cyprus and the Congo. That has come at a price. Yet our commitment to peacekeeping will not falter. It is not weakened despite the tragic loss of Zaida Catalán and many others. Rather, we owe it to them and to humankind to succeed.

I would like to conclude with the words of former Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld, a great leader who lost his life while serving us at the United Nations: "Only they who keep their eyes fixed on the far horizon will find the right road."

We all know the right road to take. As national leaders and members of the Council, we must choose peace, invest in peace and deliver peace.

The President: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Paolo Gentiloni Silveri, President of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Italy, to take the floor.

Mr. Gentiloni Siiveri (Italy): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this open debate on peacekeeping reform. I also want to thank Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat and Mr. José Ramos-Horta for their briefings, and to commend Ethiopia for resolution 2378 (2017), which we adopted a few minutes ago.

I think that the issue not only involves the role of the Security Council in maintaining international peace and security, but also the role and the reputation of the United Nations. The sustaining peace agenda stresses the need for a holistic approach that covers the United Nations pillars of security, human rights and development. Secretary-General Guterres went even further with his vision of the peace continuum, with a firm conviction that long-lasting peace can be pursued only by adopting a multidimensional approach across the whole cycle of peace, from prevention to, when necessary, peacekeeping, and from post-conflict recovery to inclusive national reconciliation and sustainable development processes. We are now called upon to put concrete actions in place so as to effectively implement that approach. As a global security provider, let me highlight Italy's commitments in that regard.

We are very proud to be the primary contributor of Blue Helmets among the Group of Western European and other States, as well as one of the most generous financial supporters. We are committed to current United Nations peacekeeping operations in Lebanon, where we have deployed approximately 1,100 peacekeepers, as well as in Kosovo, Cyprus and Mali. In addition, Italy has provided capabilities to the United Nations Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System in terms of maneuver units that are complemented by the provision of quality training for United Nations peacekeepers, based on highly professional and ethical standards. We deem it essential that a zero-tolerance policy be applied against Blue Helmets who have committed sexual violence. It is not only a matter of fully respecting fundamental human rights, but also one of United Nations credibility.

The implementation of the sustaining peace and peace continuum approaches cannot rely solely on the efforts and commitments of Member States. The Charter of the United Nations also already recognizes the key role of regional organizations, which the Council fully acknowledged as an important resource to provide local solutions to local problems. In that context, let me once again welcome the recent initiative by the Group of Five States for the Sahel and its newly established Force.

The reports and the agreement signed between the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission constitute a significant step forward and mark the beginning of a strategic partnership between the two organizations, thereby paving the way for a broader approach. Today, African problems are our problems. To concretely ensure effective operational cooperation, we are in favour of

exploring the use of assessed contributions for African Union peacekeeping missions. I would also like to stress that it is important to ensure that the appropriate set of requirements for troop quality, training, equipment and high accountability standards is met.

In that regard, Italy is ready to provide its full support through our Carabinieri and defence forces in countries ranging from Somalia to Afghanistan, Iraq to Libya and in the Sahel, the Arab Gulf, the Balkans and Eastern Europe. Wherever our assistance is required, we spare no effort in capacity-building across the board, from border security to election security and from justice and correction practices to fighting organized crime and trafficking.

We also pay attention to the capacity-building of peacekeepers, so that they can face emerging challenges, such as frequent attacks on cultural heritage. In that regard, let me just quickly remind the Council of our Unite for Heritage Task Force, established in cooperation with UNESCO — an endeavour rooted in our common cultural identity that also resonates with the Council's unanimous adoption of resolution 2347 (2017), on protecting cultural heritage in conflict-affected areas.

We must ensure that the commitments that we have undertaken in support of peacekeeping are effectively implemented. Budgetary and financial considerations are very important aspects. However, we must avoid prioritizing cost considerations over the effectiveness of peacekeeping missions. That should be our main goal if we are to be committed to a long-term solution, as it is a matter that could jeopardize the credibility of the Council. We need to demonstrate to the international community the Council's capacity to rapidly and effectively respond to current and new international challenges and threats to international peace and security. It is not an easy task, but it is our primary duty, as established in the Charter of the United Nations.

The President: I now invite The Right Honourable Mrs. Theresa May, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, to take the floor.

Mrs. May (United Kingdom): I thank you, Prime Minister Desalegn, for convening this debate and coordinating resolution 2378 (2017), on an issue of great importance to the United Kingdom. I am pleased to see its unanimous adoption. I thank our briefers — Secretary-General Guterres, His Excellency Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat and His Excellency Mr. José Ramos-Horta.

The Secretary-General has made the reform of the United Nations approach to peace and security a priority, and rightly so. The Security Council has a solemn responsibility that we must uphold. The Secretary-General has called for the United Nations to become more coordinated in its approach to conflict, while seeking to prevent outbreaks of violence before we are forced to send in peacekeepers. I share the Secretary-General's vision for sustaining peace and fully support the steps he is taking to deliver it.

For our peacekeepers to succeed, we must have a clear political strategy for resolving conflicts. For no matter how bravely our peacekeepers fulfil their mandate, peace will come about only when we get the politics of conflict right. I am therefore encouraged that resolution 2378 (2017) recognizes the vital political role of the Council and of the Secretary-General's good offices in resolving conflict.

However, politics do not stop with the peacekeeping mission on the ground. Just like peacekeepers, the Council must be willing and capable of discharging its duty. Too often we are in deadlock and unable to act. Too often we cannot agree to give a strong message of condemnation when our resolutions are not implemented by States. The Council's own performance in responding to the situation in South Sudan, where there has been conflict for five out of the six years the country has existed, has been found wanting. Therefore, just as we want to monitor the performances of our peacekeeping missions, we should monitor our own performance too.

The United Kingdom is proud to be a champion of peacekeeping reform. In September 2016, in London, we held the United Nations Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial Meeting, a landmark event with a communiqué signed by 64 countries, which set out a path to better peacekeeping. As we look ahead to the next such meeting, to be held in Vancouver in two months' time, we must concentrate on delivering the vision we agreed upon in London and continue the progress made since the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations issued its report (see S/2015/446), two years ago. We want to see better planning of peacekeeping missions, more pledges of the personnel and equipment that the United Nations needs, and stronger performance by peacekeepers on the ground.

I am delighted to see those points reflected in this resolution, and will cover each of them in turn.

First, with regard to better planning, to plan our missions effectively, we must be clear-sighted as to what they are there to achieve so that we know when we are making progress and when it is time for the mission to go. That requires the different parts of the United Nations — peace and security, development and humanitarian — to work as one to build a shared understanding of the situation and coordinate our efforts to resolve it. When the circumstances on the ground change, we must be agile in reviewing our missions and adapting them quickly.

Secondly, with regard to more pledges, collectively we have generated over 80 new pledges of personnel and capability in the past two years. That is fantastic, but pledging is only the first step. We must all turn those pledges into troops on the ground. In early July, United Kingdom troops officially opened a field hospital in Bentiu, South Sudan. In doing so, I am proud that delivered on our pledge to double the number of British forces deployed in United Nations missions. That required patient and determined effort, delivered hand in hand with our colleagues in the United Nations.

Pledges are crucial so that the United Nations can always deploy troops on basis of who is best for the job, not just who is available for the job. The quicker that we all turn those pledges from words spoken around a table into real women and men on the ground, the quicker we realize that goal. I am glad that this resolution reinforces that.

Work is also under way to improve strategic force-generation. As we reform peacekeeping into just mandates, we need to be sure that we have the right troops with the right capabilities at hand and ready to deploy. That is why the United Kingdom and France will hold a debate on this very issue next month.

I am also pleased that the resolution recognizes the vital role that women play in peacekeeping, as well as our commitment to double the number of women serving in peacekeeping by 2020. At the London Ministerial Meeting, we reaffirmed that goal and agreed that 15 per cent of all military observer and staff officer roles should be filled by women.

Thirdly, with regard to stronger performance, I salute what United Nations peacekeepers have achieved in often horribly difficult circumstances, and I pay tribute to those who have lost their lives. We ask a lot of them. We must give them every chance to succeed through high-quality training, functioning equipment and capable and decisive leadership. But when those standards are not met, we must also have accountability. The huge contribution made during peacekeeping's 70-year history is undermined with every failure to protect civilians and every instance of sexual exploitation and abuse. This resolution breaks ground by calling for the collection of performance data so we can better monitor peacekeeping performance and evaluate success. Let me be very clear: sexual exploitation and abuse cannot continue to happen. We fully support the Secretary-General's zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse and the Council's resolution 2272 (2016). That is why I joined the Secretary-General's circle of leadership and the United Kingdom signed the Voluntary Compact against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.

I would like to conclude by recognizing the importance of the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union (AU) in delivering lasting peace on the African continent. A secure funding arrangement for African Union-led operations can help us to achieve that goal. Resolution 2320 (2016) and the African Union's commitment to fund 25 per cent of AU peace-support operations provide a basis for us to work towards part funding on a case by case basis by the United Nations. I welcome further discussion to establish the role of the Council in deploying and ending peace operations and ensuring that we achieve common performance, conduct and financial management standards across all United Nations and AU operations. We must also find a creative solution to ensure funding for the African Union Mission in Somalia on secure basis, beyond 2018. All options should be on the table so that the Council can make an informed decision that is acceptable to all.

I thank all delegations for the vital contribution their countries have made to United Nations peacekeeping. I again thank Ethiopia for organizing this debate, and our briefers for addressing it. Together we can deliver better peacekeeping, and this resolution is an important step in that direction.

The President: I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of China.

Mr. Wang Yi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): At the outset, allow me to thank Ethiopia for initiating today's

debate. I also thank Secretary-General Guterres, Chairperson Faki Mahamat and Chair Ramos-Horta for their briefings.

The Chinese delegation welcomes the unanimous adoption of resolution 2378 (2017). United Nations peacekeeping operations are facing many new challenges and problems. China supports reasonable and necessary reform to make peacekeeping operations better able to fulfil their mandates. In that connection, we would like to make the following points.

First, the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations are the cornerstone of peacekeeping. Basic norms governing international relations, such as sovereign equality, non-intervention in the internal affairs of other countries and the peaceful settlement of disputes, together with the guiding principles for peacekeeping operations arising therefrom, must always be strictly observed.

Secondly, the pursuit of a political settlement should remain central to peacekeeping. The political and peaceful settlement of disputes is enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Peacekeeping operations should always serve that objective and follow sound planning in the light of the actual circumstances of host countries.

Thirdly, the establishment of a solid partnership is fundamental to peacekeeping. It is necessary to motivate host countries and troop- and fund-contributing countries, fully leverage the role of regional and subregional organizations, and forge closer partnerships.

Fourthly, the reform should facilitate sustainable development, which is vital to peacekeeping. It is important that peacekeeping reform help foster a safe and stable environment in host countries that is conducive to sustainable development and the elimination of poverty and other root causes of conflict.

In recent years, some African countries have encountered challenges in their efforts to maintain national peace and security. The international community, and the United Nations in particular, should comprehensively enhance peacekeeping cooperation with the African Union (AU). We believe that efforts must be focused on the following aspects.

First, we must enhance political support. We must support African countries in resolving African problems independently and in an African way. We must also intensify cooperation between the United Nations and the AU in conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict reconstruction.

Secondly, we must strengthen support for capacity-building. In response to the African Union's aspirations and needs, the United Nations must help with capacity-building and assist the AU in establishing permanent forces, rapid response forces and an early-warning mechanism.

Thirdly, we need to scale up financial support. China supports the African Union's proposal on financing for peacekeeping and calls upon the Security Council to come up with a concrete method, as soon as possible, to support independent AU peacekeeping operations in accordance with resolutions 2320 (2016) and 2378 (2017).

China has always firmly supported, and actively participated in, United Nations peacekeeping operations. China is a major troop-contributor and the second-largest financial contributor. We have deployed approximately 35,000 troops and 2,700 police to peacekeeping operations. At the 2015 leaders' summit on United Nations peacekeeping, President Xi Jinping put forth new proposals to strengthen peacekeeping operations and announced a host of important measures that China would take to support peacekeeping operations. We Chinese always honour our promises. China has formed an 8,000-strong standby peacekeeping force and a permanent peacekeeping police unit, provided training to over 800 peacekeepers from the United Nations and relevant countries, and has deployed its first helicopter unit for United Nations peacekeeping operations in Africa. China is actively disbursing $100 million in military assistance to the AU. We have identified support for peacekeeping operations as a priority for the China-United Nations Peace and Development Fund.

Peace is hard to achieve and even harder to keep. As a permanent member of the Security Council and the largest developing country, China knows full-well the value of peace. We will continue to work with other peace-loving nations to give concrete support to United Nations peacekeeping operations and to African countries. Together let us strive for lasting peace on our planet.

The President: I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan.

Mr. Abdrakhmanov (Kazakhstan): I congratulate Ethiopia on having assumed the presidency of the Council for this month and echo others in welcoming Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn as President during this important debate. I would also like to thank Secretary-General Guterres; the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat; and President Ramos-Horta for their insights in connection with a new trajectory for United Nations peacekeeping.

This new road map of proposed reforms, aimed at responding effectively to volatile and multiple old and new conflicts, will promote the three founding pillars of peace, development and human rights, with politics and prevention as key priorities.

Kazakhstan fully supports the significant shift from conflict resolution to prevention and sustaining peace, together with structural changes and a new configuration of United Nations entities. These suggested changes are aimed at bringing about better working methods and a better culture and ethos than those prevailing throughout the peacekeeping chain from Headquarters to the field.

The use of United Nations diplomacy, mediation and good offices, in partnership with the efforts of regional organizations such as the African Union, the European Union, the Organization of American States, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Arab League, will have far-reaching effects.

Kazakhstan is of the view that the new reforms must ensure that the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity, as enshrined in the United Nations Charter, are upheld together with that of statehood, which must be preserved. At the same time, States are obliged to fulfil their legal, moral and political responsibility to ensure the protection of civilians.

New peacekeeping and peacebuilding approaches require clear and achievable mandates, with qualified staff, equipment and resources for peacebuilding work. Moving away from mere military arrangements, the focus has to be directed towards more coherent programmes and new partnerships to reduce costs and lower the overhead expenditures of peacekeeping operations through intergovernmental support. The Council should work closely with the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund for sustained, predictable long-term funding, so that new reforms can take hold in a context of a strengthened security-development nexus.

The Security Council and the Secretariat must interact with the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the United Nations system and other partners, including regional organizations, for more informed decision-making. Other important stakeholders in this process are international and national partners, including humanitarian aid agencies and civil society.

The deployment of regional forces has proved effective, as illustrated by the hybrid missions of the United Nations and the African Union. Successful examples include the Multinational Joint Task Force, the African Union Mission in Somalia and the Regional Protection Force, because of their familiarity with the local terrain and militia tactics. Such cooperation should be strengthened on many other fronts, as indicated in the 19 April 2017 United Nations-AU partnership agreement. Collaboration with regional structures also facilitates concerted action against terrorism, organized crime, human trafficking and refugee and migration flows.

Reforms also mean holding United Nations staff accountable to the highest standards of integrity and discipline so as to prevent misconduct. In this regard, the zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse must be strictly enforced. To demonstrate its national commitment to this goal, Kazakhstan has endorsed and signed the Global Compact.

The use of modern technologies, reconnaissance assets and forces in peacekeeping missions is necessary to improve the security and safety of United Nations personnel, humanitarian actors and civilians. However, judicial and legal considerations have to be taken into account.

Simultaneously, integrating gender- and youth-sensitive analyses, as well as encouraging both groups in the context of the planning, implementing, evaluating and mission drawdown of all operations, will definitely yield successful results. More women need to be deployed in peacekeeping operations, with gender expertise in every mission component.

Kazakhstan is highly committed to peacekeeping and will continue to send well-qualified military

observers, augmenting its contribution annually. Kazakhstan is currently preparing its peacekeeping unit, building upon the valuable experience gained during Operation Iraqi Freedom, a decade ago. As an emerging troop-contributing country, we are constantly increasing our level of preparedness, as confirmed by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

Kazakhstan has established its own peacekeeping training centre, KAZCENT, which has already been acknowledged as meeting international norms. We conduct courses on a regional basis and will strive to obtain the status of a regional centre. In that connection, may I take this opportunity to thank all of our partners for the tremendous support we are receiving.

Finally, as Kazakhstan prepares for greater practical engagement in the context of United Nations peacekeeping, not only do we fully endorse the proposed reforms, but we also commit to implementing them in cooperation with the United Nations and other stakeholders so as to achieve all that we envision.

The President: I now give the floor to the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France.

Mr. Le Drian (France) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I should like to thank you, Mr. Prime Minister, for having convened this debate on an issue that you know to be so important to my country. The issue of peacekeeping reform comes in response to two requirements that are more important than ever before: on the one hand, the need for results, so as to respond to the growing complexity of crises and the expectations of peoples, and, on the other, the need for resources in a world in which they are limited and in which effectiveness is no longer just an option but an imperative.

This twofold requirement can be seen in all areas of public action, but the Charter of the United Nations conferred upon us a unique responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. This responsibility creates immense expectations and requires that we commit to ceaselessly analysing our actions; our capacity to address crises; our successes, because they do exist; and our limitations.

Here I will not resort to facile criticisms of peacekeeping to the effect that it is useless, ineffective and too costly, for we must not overlook the considerable progress that has been made in recent years or the reality that United Nations peacekeeping operations often are the sole guarantors of a minimum level of security and a minimum level of civilian protection.

Here I wish to pay tribute to the 120,000 military, police and civilians who are deployed throughout the world in difficult theatres of operations and who daily serve on our behalf as messengers and actors for peace.

However, we must also pay attention to criticism. We must not underestimate it; it must be our compass for tirelessly seeking better responses. It is this constructive criticism exercise that must enable us to move towards more effective and efficient peacekeeping, strengthen what we can do better, change what we can do differently and stop what we do not know how to do.

It can be difficult, in certain theatres, to see an end to peacekeeping operations. The United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has been deployed in that country for 18 years, and prospects for withdrawal remain remote. In South Sudan, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan, which was created to support the emergence of the youngest State in the world, now faces a civil war and a humanitarian crisis that it is having great difficulting addressing. In Mali, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, which was deployed to stabilize a country facing terrorist threats, has the sad record of being the deadliest United Nations operation.

This simple list shows the limits that we have reached. The United Nations has become the answer to all ills, and it is expected to deal with, at the lowest cost possible, the full spectrum of crises and ensure the protection of civilians, stabilization, security, justice, reintegration, human rights, humanitarian assistance and support for the political process. This is no longer tenable.

The other obstacle is the temptation to substitute, in cases where peacekeeping has been established by importing solutions from outside. We thought that by deploying 10,000 or so soldiers in support of a peace agreement we could settle conflicts for good. We have now seen the limitations of that approach in South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. A massive peacekeeper presence no longer guarantees that we will be able to have a decisive influence on the choices of the stakeholders involved in a crisis or conflict. With that in mind, I believe that it is time to update our way of thinking and consider two avenues.

First, we must strengthen States' capacities, also known as reforming the security sector. The fact that it is so often discussed without actually being accomplished has made the term something of a bogeyman. However, if supported by a credible political process, it is key to achieving sustainable security. We must acknowledge that we have not succeeded in that area. We must continue to reflect on it and come up with new responses so as to better engage and involve host countries and those that are the most affected in taking charge of their own security. That was what we were hoping for in supporting the initiative of the Group of Five for the Sahel (G-5 Sahel), five States that are dealing with the threat of terrorism and every kind of trafficking and that have decided to overcome their differences, pool their limited resources, coordinate their efforts and take joint action. They are also some of the poorest countries in the world, facing a threat that concerns us all. We therefore have a collective responsibility to support them. That is the first avenue — strengthening State capacities.

The second concerns more generally the importance of finding the tools best adapted to evolving threats and complex crises, such as President Macky Sall referred to earlier. Today in Mali we are dealing with a paradox. On the one hand, we have the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), established under Chapter VII, which has considerable resources but no mandate to combat terrorism, for reasons with which we are familiar. On the other hand, there is the Force conjointe du G5 Sahel, which has a mandate to counter terrorism but few if any resources, and must plead for support from its partners without any guarantees or visibility. That is not good enough, and if granting MINUSMA a counter-terrorism mandate is not the solution, we must come up with something else.

Of course, as has been pointed out several times, the United Nations does not have a monopoly on crisis management. The European Union and the African Union and its subregional organizations have become key players in settling crises. We must make better use of the added value of all of them to ensure a coordinated, committed response. We must reinvent the linkages among those tools. In that regard, I can only echo the Secretary-General's analysis and the paths that he highlighted in his opening address to the General Assembly (see A/72/PV.3). We must all focus on our core tasks and, to that end, we must find ways to help our regional partners become more effective.

In the past 12 months the United Nations and the African Union have worked hard to come up with meaningful options for an African response to the security challenges facing the continent. Some issues, including the critical one of financing, are still pending and must be refined. I can hear the reluctance and even hostility to this on the part of some, but I firmly believe that that is where the future lies. I am aware of the major efforts that the African Union has undertaken, and France stands ready to work together with our African partners to fulfil the commitments made in the Security Council, when the time comes.

I would like to assure the Council of France's support for its efforts regarding the topic that brings us together today. France will remain committed to working for more effective peacekeeping for the benefit of the world's most vulnerable peoples.

The President: I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): At the outset, I would like to express our condolences to the Government and the people of Mexico for the destruction and loss of human life caused by the terrible earthquakes.

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, and the Chairperson of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations for their briefings on today's topic. We welcome Ethiopia's initiative in holding a meeting on reforming United Nations peacekeeping.

In June 2014, the Russian Federation, as President of the Security Council that month, held an open debate on the same subject (see S/PV.7196). Even then it was evident that United Nations peacekeeping activities needed to adapt to present-day and international realities. Since that time, a great deal of work has been done. We have had reports from the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations and several reports by the Secretary-General, and reform of the peacebuilding architecture is under way. However, there are new tasks in the area of peacekeeping that will require comprehensive discussion both among Member States and in the Secretariat, with the aim of developing consistent and balanced approaches, dealing with the fragmented nature of the political and

legal foundations, crafting corresponding doctrines and the timely drafting normative documents based on the analysis of accumulated experience.

Russia's principal position is that to settle any conflict we must first use political methods with an emphasis on national dialogue, and that helping to establish the right conditions for that should be at the forefront of peacekeeping operations. The first, founding principle of United Nations peacekeeping is as valid as it has always been — that Blue Helmets can be deployed only with the consent of the parties to a conflict.

The second pillar of United Nations peacekeeping operations is impartiality. It is absolutely unacceptable for peacekeepers to side with any party to a conflict under any pretext. Our attitude to strengthening the mandates of peacekeeping missions is one of extreme caution. Our peacekeepers can use force only in self-defence and to protect their mandate. The experience of giving peacekeepers additional authority, for example in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Mali, has so far not convinced us that the results on the ground justify the increased casualties among peacekeepers in operations involving force. If we are to retain the option of robust mandates, they should be extremely carefully calibrated to specific situations.

We welcome the ongoing thought process in the Secretariat with regard to peacekeeping reform. The Secretary-General has a certain degree of leeway in administrative decisions, including on organizational changes in the structure of the Secretariat and United Nations missions. However, where the political aspects of peacekeeping are concerned, any changes must be approved by the relevant intergovernmental body, and that applies particularly to sensitive issues touching on State sovereignty. A recent trend, actively promoted by the Secretariat and a support group from among certain States, is that of so-called intelligence in peacekeeping. Of course, peacekeeping operations consist first and foremost of military units deployed in regions where there are security threats, and in that case they certainly cannot manage without appropriate reconnaissance of the area, but even here there remains the important question of how the information received will be controlled and its confidentiality maintained.

However, we will not accept any attempts to interpret such intelligence broadly or apply it flexibly. Any transfer of data regarding the operational activities of any peacekeeping mission can occur only with the consent of the host Government, and only for the clearly defined, limited, legitimate goals of ensuring the security of peacekeepers and the protection of civilians, an approach endorsed by Member States when they approved the report (A/70/19) of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. We believe that it would be unacceptable to interpret arbitrarily the mandates given by Member States to the Secretariat. It would undermine the authority of the United Nations and have an adverse impact on the conduct of peacekeeping operations.

One very important factor in the maintenance of international peace and security is a genuine partnership among the members of the international community. We welcome the efforts of the regional and subregional organizations that are operating in areas under their jurisdiction in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. We note the significant achievements of the African Union in establishing a continent-wide architecture for peace and security. We firmly believe that only the proactive efforts of Africans themselves will make it possible to resolve conflicts on the continent.

We call on all States to help to ensure that African countries play a principal role in determining ways to establish peace and security, in line with the principle that they themselves have established of African solutions to African issues. African countries not only have to deal with domestic problems and conflict but are also facing an unprecedented surge in terrorist activity that has increased sharply as a result of adventurist military actions in the Middle East and North Africa.

The flood of arms and munitions flowing through Libya southward to Mali, the Niger and Chad has created numerous terrorist threats in the Sahara-Sahel region. The Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant has ramped up its cooperation with Boko Haram and Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb. In northern Mali and the Niger, Al-Mourabitoun has launched activities in an attempt to unite every extremist group in Mali, the Niger and Mauritania. Al-Shabaab remains active in Somalia.

Russia has continued to advocate for more effective assistance to African countries in building their capacity to combat terrorism. We stand ready to share our experience in counter-terrorism with our African partners. Hundreds of African peacekeepers and police are trained every year in Russian educational facilities.

African countries are raising the question of material and financial assistance for their efforts in maintaining international peace and security, including as part of the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union, and we are ready to work to arrive at mutually acceptable agreements.

There are also prospects for cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), an opportunity predicated on the Russian initiative to establish a United Nations mission in south-eastern Ukraine to protect the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, with the goal of facilitating strict and full implementation of the Minsk agreements on resolving the crisis in Ukraine. As we know, those agreements were approved under the Council's unanimous adoption of resolution 2202 (2015), and it would not be a good idea to retreat from them.

Peacekeeping is one of the key areas of United Nations activities and has enormous practical significance for the lives of millions of people. Every Member State contributes to it, particularly the troop-contributing countries. We call for all shared issues pertaining to peacekeeping to be discussed in forums dedicated to them, such as the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and the Fifth Committee. I believe that synergistic efforts at the General Assembly and Security Council will enable us to better preserve the universal nature and unique legitimacy of United Nations peacekeeping.

The President: I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan.

Mr. Kono (Japan): It is a great pleasure for me to be here in the Security Council today to discuss the challenges facing United Nations peacekeeping and its reform. I would like to pay tribute to His Excellency Mr. Hailemariam Desalegn, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, for his initiative in hosting today's meeting, and to His Excellency Secretary-General António Guterres for his leadership of United Nations peacekeeping reform.

Peacekeeping is a noble and lofty effort and one that the United Nations has led for decades in order to maintain international peace and security. Under the banner of contributing proactively to that goal, Japan has made every effort to achieve peace and stability in the international community, and United Nations peacekeeping has unquestionably been an indispensable part of our efforts. In 2015, we enacted a series of laws on peace and security to enable our country to further contribute to the diverse activities of United Nations peacekeeping. This year also marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of our International Peace Cooperation Act. During the past quarter century, Japan has dispatched more than 12,500 personnel to 27 missions, including in Cambodia, the Golan Heights, Timor-Leste and Haiti. Most recently, in the longest deployment period to date for Japanese peacekeepers, we sent engineering units to the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) for five years. They repaired approximately 260 kilometres of roads and developed 500,000 square metres of land. Japan will continue to dispatch staff officers to UNMISS headquarters and contribute to establishing peace and stability in South Sudan.

With regard to today's topic of United Nations peacekeeping reform, Japan fully supports implementing and following up on reform efforts with the aim of making United Nations peacekeeping more effective and efficient. Resolution 2378 (2017), which we adopted today, will be a powerful engine for advancing our reform efforts, and one that Japan strongly supports and will work to implement. Among the many areas requiring reform, I would like to emphasize the importance of training and building the capacity of United Nations peacekeepers. Well-trained and skilled peacekeepers are essential to ensuring effective and efficient peacekeeping operations, and we need to fill the gap between the demands on the ground and peacekeepers' current capabilities and equipment. Japan has been a strong United Nations partner in developing the United Nations Project for African Rapid Deployment of Engineering Capabilities, which has been conducted in Kenya since 2015. Under that partnership, some 80 Japanese Self-Defence Forces personnel have been dispatched as instructors to train 130 engineering service members from five East African countries.

Since more than half of United Nations peacekeeping missions are deployed in Africa, we believe that cooperation between them and African Union peace support operations is critical. Japan will continue to promote human resources development for social stability in Africa, which is one of the priority areas of the Nairobi Declaration of the sixth Tokyo International Conference on African Development. In partnership with the United Nations and major troop-contributing countries of Asia and Africa, Japan will

further enhance capacity-building in the countries of the Indo-Pacific region. I would also like to stress that it is important for the United Nations and its Member States to coordinate their capacity-building activities in a coherent manner. At a meeting that Japan hosted last month, in which officials from more than 30 countries participated, the need for such coherence in coordination was widely recognized.

The Secretary-General's report on a mechanism to fill the gap between force generation and capabilities will be submitted to the Security Council within 90 days of today's adoption of resolution 2378 (2017). I hope its recommendations will be based on best practices, including the Project for African Rapid Deployment of Engineering Capabilities. We are committed to further discussion, based on that report.

I would also like to emphasize the importance of the role of women in peacekeeping and of the development of human resources among the young people who represent our future. It is women and children who are most affected and hurt by conflict, and female peacekeepers can provide them with the appropriate support and address their specific needs. Women are indispensable to peacekeeping, and Japan will host an outreach seminar next month in Tokyo to promote efforts to appoint more senior women to mission leadership positions. We also aim to expand the number of civilians contributing to peacekeeping by enhancing training for young people.

Japan will continue to contribute proactively to peacekeeping activities, and as a member of the Security Council, we will take an active part in the discussions of United Nations peacekeeping reform and coordinate closely with other member States, as well as the United Nations as a whole, with the aim of achieving more effective, efficient and agile United Nations peacekeeping operations.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Uruguay.

Mr. Loedel (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, Uruguay expresses its solidarity with all those countries that in recent days have fallen victim to violent climatic events — including Mexico, which suffered a second earthquake yesterday that caused death and destruction.

I would like to thank the Ethiopian presidency, in particular the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Mr. Hailemariam Desalegn, for convening this timely and important debate on the process of reform of United Nations peacekeeping operations. I also welcome the open and transparent way with which Ethiopia conducted the negotiations for the adoption of a resolution as important as that adopted today (resolution 2378 (2017)).

I welcome the statement by the Secretary-General, and I thank him for the clarity of the concepts contained therein, which bring the vision of the Secretariat on this issue of great importance to the membership.

Similarly, we thank the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the representative of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations for their briefings.

Allow me to reaffirm once more the commitment of my country to peacekeeping operations, a commitment that was made even before they were called peacekeeping operations. Despite its small population, Uruguay has deployed more than 43,800 personnel in its extensive history as a contributor of contingents and police in more than 20 operations around the world. Today the contribution of Uruguayan troops places our country among the major contributors in the Americas and among the top 20 in the world. That decades-long effort has provided our country with very rich experience in peacekeeping operations, especially bearing in mind that more than 80 per cent of our generals, more than 70 per cent of officers and 70 per cent of our troops have already participated in such operations.

Our country has followed the evolution of peacekeeping operations in the debate and on the ground. As an elected member of the Security Council, we take this opportunity to state Uruguay's support of the reform process, whose objective is to make peacekeeping operations more efficient and effective, and to ensure that they can continue to fulfil the mandates for which they were designed.

Peacekeeping operations continue to be the most efficient and economic way that the international community has to contribute to peace. Therefore, we should be conscious that budgetary decisions and policies must always go together, so as to prevent one or the other from rendering a mandate non-viable. In that regard, I should like to share some considerations that are central to my country at a time when there is talk of reforming the process. They reflect the national

position, which we have systemically made known and defended during our 21 months in the Council.

First, we believe that there are two documents that constitute the absolute starting point of the current reform process. Those are the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (see S/2015/446) and the subsequent report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations (S/2015/682). The contents of both documents remain valid and current. Although there has been progress in the implementation of the recommendations contained therein, much remains to be done, bearing in mind above all that the way forward should be based on the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the basic principles of peacekeeping.

Secondly, we believe that the success of a peacekeeping operation depends, to a great extent, on the plans made by four parties with shared responsibility, namely, the Security Council, the States or parties in control of the territory in question, the troop- and police-contributing countries, and the Secretariat. The Council must remain united when agreeing on political strategies that allow for the design of operations that encourage national actors in conflict to make real commitments to lasting and peaceful political solutions. That must be in addition to more flexible and adaptable operations, with clear mandates based in real and appropriate priorities and resources. There have been improvements in those areas, but they are insufficient.

Once an operation is deployed with a valid mandate, the Council has the responsibility to demand and obtain from the host States full respect and compliance with the terms agreed in the status-of-forces agreements. Those documents guarantee the protection of the personnel that a country voluntarily contributes, and ensure the functionality of the operation. We must prevent any State, least of all a State that is part of an operation, from obstructing missions established by the Council.

As a historical troop-contributing country, Uruguay attaches particular importance to the responsibilities of troop- and police-contributing countries, with the understanding that they are the ones active in the field and the ones who should implement the mandates. In that regard, the training of what in our country is called "the peace worker of the twenty-first century" is essential, that is, training in the complexity of the tasks to carry out the whole of the mandate. That includes avoiding the absence of command, avoiding refusal to obey orders, avoiding the failure to protect civilians, or insufficient equipment, to mention some of the issues that should not be tolerated.

We have seen more than we would wish of that, in particular when it comes to protecting civilians in pressing situations. I am not going to relate the national position on this issue now, because it is well known and respected. But I would like to emphasize the contribution of the Kigali Principles on the Protection of Civilians to the reform process, given that they refer to efficiency in the protection of civilians derived from training and conduct in the field and accountability.

As for the Secretariat, its role is decisive in terms of guidance and recommendations, its capacity to bring together basic and higher criteria regarding the operation and fulfilment of the mandates, and the determination of the reconfiguration needs of the missions. The recent budget and staff cuts force Uruguay to reaffirm that any reconfiguration should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and with the full evaluation of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

Thirdly, I would like to relate our position on the evolution of the reform process. We believe that the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34) has an important contribution to make, as do the Fifth Committee, the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations, and the Secretariat. We believe that we must begin to overcome the rivalry between bodies or committees, which slows the process, since each one has specific tasks that, when summed up, make a positive contribution. We understand that the efforts of the Secretary-General point to this in his initiative to reform the peace and security architecture of the Organization.

I wanted to make an express reference to the C-34, since our country has consistently defended its work, for it carries out substantial and relevant work that, in our view, deserves special mention, in particular that having to do with consideration of the recommendations of the reports of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations and of the Secretary-General.

Finally, I wish to speak on how to ensure the implementation and follow-up of the reform. The resolution we adopted today includes elements that will allow the Council to be more active, in particular through the consideration of reports of the Secretary-

General on progress made, as well as the holding of open annual debates. We applaud these elements.

In conclusion, reaffirming the ongoing and unchanged commitment of Uruguay, I wish to recall that without making systematic the participation of women, peacekeeping operations will be unable to achieve optimal efficiency or success.

The President: I now I give the floor to the representative of the Plurinational State of Bolivia.

Mr. Llorentty Solíz (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I regret that our Minister for Foreign Affairs had to leave unexpectedly last night and could not be here today. In any case, Bolivia congratulates the Ethiopian presidency for having organized this debate. Bolivia not only voted in favour of resolution 2378 (2017), adopted today, but we co-sponsored it as well.

Also, as you have expressed, Mr. President, the Government and the people of Bolivia convey their deep sorrow and offer condolences to the Government and the people of Mexico for the dead and injured as a result of yesterday's earthquake. We extend that sentiment as well to our brothers and sisters in the Caribbean and in the United States who have suffered the consequences of terrible hurricanes in recent days.

Bolivia appreciates the statement by the Secretary-General, in addition to the reports of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Chair of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations.

Two years ago, the United Nations received the report and recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (see S/2015/446). Generally, it examines the different environments and tasks that such operations are currently facing, and its approach enables the identification of different priorities and measures to strengthen them in order to create a coherent and adaptable system to deal with the new conflict and post-conflict situations.

We also received the recommendations of the former Secretary-General, who, in his report of 2 September 2015 (S/2015/682) urges the consolidation of a coherent and viable reform in peace operations so as to make them more effective, more nimble and more accountable to the countries and people they help. The report states that reform must focus on three pillars: prevention and mediation, closer regional and global partnerships, and new ways of planning and carrying out peace operations.

Bolivia champions dialogue, negotiation and peaceful conflict-settlement mechanisms. Bolivia affirms that a preventive approach, in the framework of a case-by-case study of the context of each conflict, is essential for an adequate design of mandates, whatever their nature, in strict respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of States, while promoting their national ownership and without using such operations as tools for intervention.

On the other hand, in order to prevent conflicts, it is crucial to strengthen dialogue, negotiation and collaboration with regional and subregional partners. This is reflected, for example, in the concerted efforts of the African Union, through its Peace and Security Council, and subregional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States and the Economic Community of Central African States, among others. Those efforts have led to significant progress in conflict prevention. Such efforts become more viable when subregional and regional organizations and the United Nations share a common understanding of a crisis and a unified approach for its resolution.

In that regard, we must take into account all possible support modalities for the financing of peace operations in a sustained, predictable and flexible manner, in accordance with resolution 2320 (2016). Those modalities should also be evaluated and revised in a way that would grant greater autonomy to the United Nations vis-à-vis those countries making higher contributions, since that factor could potentially be used to undermine the very goals and purposes of the missions. In that sense, mandates must be clear and must match the reality on the ground. They must be planned according to the objectives they aim to achieve, and there must be adequate staffing that is properly trained and equipped.

It is not possible to achieve the objectives solely through budgetary adjustments that do not necessarily match the reality on the ground, and without consulting with the host country. In many cases, the countries that can make greater contributions also have a greater historical debt to the countries in which the missions are deployed. We believe that a joint strategic assessment at the time of authorizing peace missions between the African Union and the United Nations should include, among other considerations, the financial consequences

of the deployment of such missions, and should be respected and implemented.

Likewise, in the context of peacebuilding, it is imperative to comply with the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda, in line with resolution 1325 (2000). The participation of women in peace processes must be underscored, ensured and promoted through an active role in prevention, mediation, negotiation and dialogue, in order to reach solutions on an equal footing, including in post-conflict reconstruction, through women's economic, social and cultural reintegration. Equally, priority must be given to the inclusion of an equitable number of women in the field of peace operations.

With regard to sexual violence in conflict, we see with great concern that this scourge leaves victims at all levels of society. In war and armed conflict, it has always resulted in devastating consequences for humankind. Bolivia reiterates its support for and commitment to the Secretary-General's zero-tolerance policy. We also commend and support his comprehensive initiatives and his programme of action against sexual exploitation and abuse.

Bolivia reaffirms its support for and commitment to peace operations and appreciates the work of United Nations personnel, as well as personnel from troop- and police contributing countries — men and women who risk their lives every day in order to consolidate a lasting and sustainable peace, in keeping with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

It is not our intention to shift the General Assembly's general debate to the Security Council, but the United States delegation has brought up some themes to which my delegation believes it must respond. It spoke of the current composition of the Human Rights Council. It is no coincidence that the United States is challenging the composition of the Human Rights Council, as it is unable to control it. I would like to call for a sincere debate on the same terms for the reform the Security Council — to reform it and to ensure that there is the full and active participation of many regions that are unfortunately excluded from the Council by its current composition.

Similarly, we believe that one of the primary threats to multilateralism and to the agreements reached by the United Nations is unilateralism. This morning, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries — which is made up of 120 Members of the Organization, that is, almost two thirds of membership of the United Nations, which has called for the reform of the Council — approved the New York political declaration. Allow me to read out two paragraphs from the declaration that touch upon the statement made by the United States delegation.

The Ministers for Foreign Relations of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries

(*spoke in English*)

> "reaffirm their opposition to unilateralism and unilateral coercive measures imposed by certain States, including those of an economic, financial or trade nature not in accordance with international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the norms and the principles governing peaceful relations among States, which can lead to the erosion and violation of the United Nations Charter, international law and human rights, the use and threat of use of force" — let me repeat that — "the use threat of use of force and pressure and coercive measures as a means to achieving their national policy objectives, including those measures used as tools for political, economic and financial pressure against any country, in particular against developing countries".

They further express their

> "concern at the continued imposition of such measures, which hindered the well-being of populations of the affected countries and that create obstacles to the full realization of their human rights".

I would like to read out another paragraph:

> "the Ministers declare to reaffirm their determination to refrain from recognizing, adopting or implementing extraterritorial or unilateral coercive measures or laws, including unilateral economic sanctions, other intimidating measures and arbitrary travel restrictions, that seek to exert pressure on non-aligned countries — threatening their sovereignty and independence, and their freedom of trade and investment — and to prevent them from exercising their right to decide, by their own free will, their own political, economic and social systems, where such measures or laws constitute flagrant violations of the Charter, international law, particularly the principles of non-intervention, self-determination, and independence of the States subject to such

practices, and the multilateral trading system as well as the norms and principles governing friendly relations among States, and in this regard oppose and condemn these measures or laws and their continued application, persevere with efforts to effectively reverse them and urge other States to do likewise, as called for by the General Assembly and other United Nations organs, and request States applying these measures or laws to revoke them fully and immediately".

(*spoke in Spanish*)

Mention has been made of the Republic of Cuba, which has been the victim in recent days of a hurricane that unfortunately caused very heavy material damage and regrettably brought the loss of life. Despite this situation, however, Cuba has been sending doctors to other sister islands of the Caribbean in order to meet their needs resulting from this natural disaster.

Without a doubt, Cuba is an example of solidarity; in exchange for this daily solidarity, it has not asked for anything from anyone — no oil or mining concession — nor has it placed any conditions on its contributions. Cuba is also a concrete example of human rights. I would like many of our countries to attain the level of education and health that the Cubans have attained. But most importantly, Cuba is an example of dignity. For more than 60 years, Cuba has suffered under a unilateral and unfair blockade, which is why the General Assembly has met on several occasions to seek an end to such blockade.

Bolivia therefore demands that the United States unilaterally and unconditionally end this unfair blockade, which for more than 60 years has caused so much suffering for the Cuban people. This failed policy is unfair and it should come to an end. The new actions announced by President Trump represent a resurgence of the financial, commercial and economic blockade against Cuba and reverses the advances made in the bilateral relations between Cuba and United States. Accordingly, the United Nations must abide by its decisions, and the United States should not only lift its criminal blockade but also pay reparative compensation for the damages that it has caused. It should also return Guantanamo to Cuban sovereignty.

Mention has also been made of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, which is now facing precisely what 120 Members of the Organization have rejected, namely, unilateral sanctions and threats of invasion by the Government of the United States, which of course is seeking to boycott the dialogue process that is being pursued. Bolivia naturally and categorically rejects these unilateral sanctions. We reject these threats of invasion and the use of force, in accordance with the United Nations Charter. Furthermore, we wish to express support and solidarity for President Nicolás Maduro Moros and the people of Venezuela. Bolivia supports the initiatives for dialogue so that the democratic means proposed by the Government of Venezuela may resolve the situation in the country.

Mention has also been made of relations with Israel. The Non-Aligned Movement, the Group of 77 and China and the vast majority of members of the General Assembly have clearly expressed their opposition to the criminal occupation by Israel of Palestinian territory. Bolivia condemns the building of new settlements as well as the military aggressions against Palestinian people. We demand that the two-State solution be implemented, creating a Palestinian State and an Israeli State within pre-1967 borders and with East Jerusalem as its capital.

The President: I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than four minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate their texts in writing and deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber.

I now invite His Excellency Mr. Jacob Zuma, President of South Africa, to take the floor.

President Zuma: Unfortunately, I am just hearing now that I have to condense my statement. Although I had no time to do any condensing, I will try to be brief.

South Africa welcomes the convening of today's open debate on peacekeeping operations. For Africa and for all States members of the African Union (AU), the issue of peacekeeping operations — in particular, AU-led peace-support operations — is one of great importance. The debate is timely, as it comes amid a manifestation of diverse threats to peace and security in Africa.

The scourges of terrorism and violent extremism, as well as the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons, are some of the security challenges that Africa has to contend with currently. Furthermore, the emergence of new armed groups and splinter armed

groups and the presence of negative forces in some of the conflict situations on the continent are a source of concern. Some of these threats maybe peculiar to the African continent. At the same time, it could be argued that some threats, such as terrorism and violent extremism, are global phenomena, with implications that transcend borders. As such, the United Nations has an obligation to support regional peace and security initiatives undertaken in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

Significant progress has been made in advancing the partnership between the United Nations and the AU on matters of peace and security. In this regard, we welcome the signing of the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for an Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, on 19 April. The Framework is a clear demonstration that African peace and security challenges cannot be left to the AU alone to resolve, given their complexity and far-reaching implications. The Framework will further enhance and consolidate coordination, cooperation and collaboration between the two organizations.

The issue of practicable, flexible and sustainable financing for AU peace-support operations authorized by the Security Council is one of great concern to South Africa. While we understand the apprehension of some Council members regarding the use of United Nations assessed contributions for the financing of such operations, we also maintain the view that the discussions of the Security Council on this issue of fundamental importance to Africa should be guided by the principle of the primacy of the United Nations, through the Security Council, in the maintenance of international peace and security, and by the common understanding that when the AU intervenes in conflicts and crisis situations on the continent, it does so on behalf of the Security Council. Therefore, the United Nations has a duty to provide United Nations assessed contributions for AU-led peace-support operations that are authorized by the Security Council .

South Africa therefore welcomes the steps taken by the Secretary-General in finding a solution to this matter. We have taken note of the four financing model options through which United Nations assessed contributions can be utilized to meet the financial gaps in AU-led peace-support operations, presented by the Secretary-General in his report (S/2017/454) on options for authorization and support for African Union peace support operations. These include subventions in exceptional and emergency circumstances; joint financing of a jointly developed budget; United Nations support offices; and joint financing of a hybrid mission. We further note that of these four, the Secretary-General has recommended that the Security Council endorse, in principle, the option of joint financing through a jointly developed budget.

It is my delegation's considered view that the Security Council should explore implementing all the financing model options proposed in the Secretary-General's report on a case-by-case basis, noting that this will be determined by the nature and peculiarities of each AU-led peace-support operation. However, these should be applied in such a way as to build on the successes while also addressing the weaknesses of these models by learning from past experience.

I wish to reiterate South Africa's continued commitment to the revitalization of the AU Peace Fund. We support the three windows of activities to be financed by the Fund. Our evaluation is that mediation and preventive diplomacy should remain the primary priority of our peace and security activities so as to mitigate the impacts of conflicts.

South Africa agrees with the observation in the report of the Secretary-General, that

> "[p]eace support operations are a key tool on which the international community increasingly relies to address the challenges to peace and security in Africa" (*S/2017/454, para. 2*).

For that reason, my delegation believes that the United Nations can do more on the issue of financing of African peace-support operations, taking into consideration the circumstances under which such operations are deployed, often at significant human sacrifice. In essence, this is a fundamental contribution to any peace-support operation that ought to be appreciated by the international community at large.

To conclude, I further wish to remind everyone of our shared goal and responsibility towards a peaceful, stable and prosperous Africa, in line with the objectives of the AU Agenda 2063 flagship project, the Silencing the Guns by 2020 initiative.

The President: I now invite Her Excellency Ms. Kersti Kaljulaid, President of the Republic of Estonia, to take the floor.

President Kaljulaid: I thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's open debate. We in Estonia remain committed to Secretary-General Guterres' reform agenda. Reforms should take us to a more effective United Nations, with a clear emphasis on conflict prevention and mediation. Our peacekeeping operations must have tangible targets and exit strategies. To be effective, the operations must have built-in flexibility, as the surrounding situation is inevitably volatile.

The best information about the changing needs come from our mission commanders and other field entities. Applying their suggestions guarantees automatic adaptation to changes on the ground. In addition, listening to those in the field and taking into account what they have to say is good for the motivation of our field staff. We need those with courage to reach out to us decision makers. These people are with us only if we respond in a receptive manner. Thus, we create a positive circuit of adaptation necessary to achieve our peacekeeping objectives.

To achieve sustainable peace, partnership with regional organizations, host Governments and local communities is vital. It is best done by demonstrating day after day how important it is for us to protect civilians, assure the sustainability of the rule of law, respect for human rights and international law, and to involve local actors in supporting the core values underlying all our actions.

Peacekeeping operations need to be complemented with activities aimed at effectively improving the living conditions of the affected populations, including the quick implementation of effective and visible projects that create jobs and deliver basic social services in the post-conflict phase. Also, all mechanisms to support women's full participation in peacebuilding and security issues are vital, as they will also guarantee the best protection of children in mission areas.

We can achieve sustainable peace only if we have a thorough and broad understanding of conflicts and their root causes. In that regard, it is unfortunate that the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali will be left without its intelligence unit. The latter provided decision makers on all levels with unique understanding of the issues at hand.

United Nations peacekeeping operations have an essential role to play in securing peace and stability globally. Unfortunately, peacekeeping operations are sometimes seen as a waste of resources, with a lack of positive outcomes, but we know that the truth is quite the opposite, and we must find ways to make that common knowledge. Communication is an important guarantee of the continued support of general public.

Wide attention via modern channels is difficult to achieve, but it is rapidly becoming one of the most efficient tools for sharing our objectives, actions and achieved results. As research shows, peacekeeping reduces the number of civilians killed. Moreover, it is also cost-effective. The United Nations peacekeeping budget is less than half of 1 per cent of global military spending, and it is shared among all 193 United Nations Member States. That is the simple truth that we have every right to be proud of while we continue to aspire to the constant improvement of our peacekeeping activities, as we should do in this unpredictable world.

The President: I now give the floor to the Vice-President of the Republic of Indonesia.

Mr. Kalla (Indonesia): I thank the presidency of Ethiopia for convening this open debate.

Indonesia's commitment to global peace and security is cemented within our Constitution. As such, shortly after its independence, Indonesia at once deployed its first Blue Helmets. Today, we stand as one of the top contributing countries. We will soon deploy 1,040 peacekeepers, including those deployed to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic.

The contribution of the Blue Helmets to global peace and security is undisputable. However, in the age of global uncertainty and its ensuing challenges, reform is needed. Indonesia therefore supports United Nations peacekeeping reform. I wish to highlight several pertinent points.

First, successful reform requires collective and strong political support. Partnership between the Security Council, the Secretariat and the contributing and host countries must be enhanced. The silo mindset of the United Nations should therefore be removed. Secondly, the 2015 report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (S/2015/446) provides important guidelines for essential shifts in peacekeeping operations. We must translate the guidelines into action. Thirdly, we must continue to interlink preventive diplomacy, mediation and peacebuilding. They form essential elements for sustaining peace.

Reform must reflect the actual needs of peacekeepers on the ground. Capacity-building is one essential element. it requires standardized knowledge and innovative training, thereby enhancing peacekeepers' capability to protect civilians, while ensuring their own safety. In the end, the world will benefit from more capable United Nations peacekeepers.

On our part, Indonesia stands ready to contribute, not only to enhancing the professionalism of peacekeepers, but also to promoting the role of women in peacekeeping. Over the past three years, the Indonesia Peacekeeping Center has trained peacekeepers from 30 countries, including 7,000 Indonesian peacekeepers.

The important role of regional mechanisms in maintaining peace and stability is indispensable. In South-East Asia, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations has created a regional ecosystem of peace, stability and prosperity. This exemplifies the concrete contribution of regional organizations to global peace. The United Nations must therefore strengthen its partnership and engagement with regional organizations. Its partnership with the African Union, for instance, has contributed to overcoming capacity gaps in the region.

Determined to be a true partner for world peace, Indonesia will run for election as a non-permanent member of the Security Council for the term 2019-2020 in order to create a global ecosystem of peace and stability, to ensure synergy between sustaining peace and development agenda, and to combat terrorism, radicalism and violent extremism.

The President: I now give the floor to the Deputy Prime Minister of Nepal.

Mr. Krishna (Nepal): Nepal congratulates the Ethiopian presidency of the Council on convening this important open debate. We also thank the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for their valuable briefings.

Peacekeeping is the United Nations flagship activity in the maintenance of international peace and security. Today's peacekeeping operations are not limited to monitoring ceasefires, but have evolved into multidimensional operations. However, peacekeeping cannot do what negotiated political settlements can do. Also, there can be no development without peace and no lasting peace without sustainable development. Peacekeeping efforts should build the domestic capacities of countries emerging from conflict and ensure their own impartiality and credibility.

Nepal has been considered a consistent and reliable partner of United Nations peacekeeping for nearly 60 years now. Over 130,000 Nepalese peacekeepers have served to date, and 73 have made the ultimate sacrifice. Currently the sixth-largest troop and police contributor, and having served in some of the most difficult missions, Nepal wishes to make the following points on the reform of United Nations peacekeeping.

United Nations peace operations have successfully adapted to evolving situations, and that should continue. Reform should be a continuous process, not a one-time event. Reform depends on the political will, commitment, support and solidarity of all the stakeholders. Selective implementation of the recommendations contained in major reports cannot produce the results that we all want.

Nepal welcomes the Secretary-General's call for a surge in peace diplomacy. It should be used to speed up reform in the Council's working methods, including by supporting the capacity-building of national Governments in sustaining peace.

Prevention and sustaining peace should reinforced with resources for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and coordination with the Security Council, the Secretariat and troop- and police-contributing countries, who need to be there right from the planning phase.

Peacekeeping missions should protect civilians and ensure the safety and security of the peacekeepers to help keep their morale high so that they may deliver even in adverse situations.

I wish to conclude by assuring the Assembly of Nepal's commitment to supporting reforms in peace operations. Let us all move beyond non-implementation of the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (see S/2015/446) and work together to make United Nations peacekeeping successful.

The President: I now invite Her Excellency Ms. Erna Solberg, Prime Minister of Norway, to take the floor.

Ms. Solberg (Norway): I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, the Republic of Korea and my own country, Norway. In 2014 our three countries established an

informal cross-regional group of friends of the United Nations peace operations. The group has since been meeting regularly to facilitate dialogue on reforms.

According to the Office of the United Nations high Commissioner for Refugees, more than 65 million people were forcibly displaced by conflict last year — the highest number on record. Behind those figures there are individual men, women and children — families that have been broken up and forced to leave their homes. We must do what we can to prevent, solve and alleviate the immense source of human suffering.

The 2015 report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (see S/2015/446) was a milestone in our efforts to make peace operations more agile and effective. Together with other recent reviews, the report represents a coherent set of recommendations to adapt United Nations peace operations to the increasingly complex realities of the field. I would like to highlight three areas where the Security Council can engage and work in close dialogue with the Secretariat, troop- and police-contributing countries and host States.

First, the search for a political solution should guide the design and deployment of all peace operations. Security Council members must strive to overcome their own differences in order to maximize the Council's political leverage. Only then can we expect genuine engagement from political leaders and parties to a conflict. But ultimately, no outside engagement can be a substitute for genuine political will from the leaders of the countries themselves.

Secondly, the United Nations cannot and should not go it alone. In these times of rapid and profound changes in the global security landscape, we need a strong global peace and security architecture led by the United Nations working in close partnership with regional and subregional organizations. We particularly welcome the new strategic partnership between the United Nations and the African Union (AU).

We encourage the Security Council to make the most of its relationship with the African Union Peace and Security Council. It is urgent to agree on a more predictable system for financing and support for AU-led operations. There will be no lasting peace in Somalia or in the Sahel region if the African Union Mission to Somalia or the joint force of the Group of Five States for the Sahel are not adequately financed and supported.

Thirdly, the litmus test for our efforts should be more effective delivery in the field. It must include more active engagement with local communities, not least with women. Effective peace operations depend on the ability of the United Nations to deliver as one, often in difficult environments. We are therefore greatly encouraged by the Secretary-General's initiative to overhaul the United Nations management systems to build unity and efficiency across the system. Priority should be given to ensure the safety and security of the personnel we deploy to the field on our behalf.

We are pleased that Secretary-General Guterres has made continued reform a cornerstone of his agenda, building on the framework of the reviews. We can count on the continued support of Ethiopia, Norway and the Republic of Korea, as well as other friends of United Nations peace operations. We will keep pressing for change to allow United Nations peace operations to fulfil their true potential. We are convinced that the only way forward is by working together, focusing on what unites us rather than on what divides us.

The President: I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Lithuania.

Mr. Linkevičius (Lithuania): I thank the President for organizing this highly pertinent open debate. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the representative of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations for their briefings.

Since the inception of the United Nations, peacekeeping — a concept that was not even mentioned in the Charter of the United Nations — has developed into an indispensable tool for the maintenance of national peace and security. Over time it has become a flagship activity of the United Nations.

Today peacekeepers operate in much more challenging environments than at any time in history. They serve in areas where there is no peace to keep. The multidimensional character of today's peacekeeping and the new, demanding realities on the ground point to the urgency of peacekeeping reform.

As a troop-contributing country, Lithuania has a great interest in making United Nations peacekeeping more efficient and correspondent to the needs of the twenty-first century. In October, an additional 34 troops from Lithuania will join the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission

in Mali, making a total of 39 service members — a contribution to be maintained through the next year.

More than two years ago, the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations published its recommendations on peacekeeping reform (see S/2015/446). It is true that the implementation and follow-up of those recommendations has been far too slow. Recent peace and security reform initiatives of the Secretary-General provide us with a unique chance to build the momentum and keep the spirit of the High-level Panel alive over the next year and beyond. The reform proposals and determination of the Secretary-General give us a genuine hope that the full implementation of his reform agenda might reshape peacekeeping and bring the prevention potential of the United Nations to its full realization.

"We the peoples" are the first words of the 1945 Charter of the United Nations. However, today United Nations peace operations are rightly criticized for neglecting the very people that the United Nations is entrusted to protect. The protection of civilians under imminent threat must remain a key priority in all peacekeeping missions. In that context, I am proud to announce that, on 13 September, Lithuania endorsed and recognized the Kigali Principles on the Protection of Civilians.

We are deeply concerned that, despite the long-declared zero-tolerance policy towards all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse by the United Nations and related personnel, sexual abuse continues to take place. Lithuania strongly supports Secretary-General's efforts to act with determination and bring sexual exploitation to an end. A few days ago, Lithuania signed a compact on the elimination of sexual exploitation and abuse, and the President of Lithuania joined the Circle of Leadership.

Much too often, mediation and peace processes remain male-dominated. While women are disproportionately affected by conflict, the critical role of women in negotiating, keeping and building peace in their communities is often overlooked. The deployment of women's protection advisers and human rights and gender-awareness training are useful tools in peacekeeping and should be further expanded.

The safety and security of United Nations personnel and peacekeepers in the field must remain a high priority. Clear steps are needed to ensure that our peacekeepers have the capabilities they need to protect themselves first of all and, of course, fulfil their mandate. Continuous attacks against the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali and many other peacekeeping missions indicate the urgent need for our collective reform action. The use of technologies in peacekeeping should improve early-warning capabilities and enhance the ability to detect, mitigate, deter and respond to all types of threats. That is especially pertinent where peacekeepers face asymmetrical threats.

In conclusion, we believe that both the Secretary-General and Member States could build on the emerging consensus to better integrate prevention and sustaining peace into the work of United Nations peace operations. Let us unite around the proposed peace and security reform initiative of the Secretary-General and fully utilize such unique momentum to reform United Nations peacekeeping.

The meeting rose at 1.35 p.m.